DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 296 779 PS 017 397

AUTHOR Sreedhar, Sulochana, Ed.
TITLE Universalization of Elementary Education: Some Issues.
INSTITUTION Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups' Educational Improvement, Kolhapur (India).
PUB DATE 21 Sep 87
NOTE 78p.; Document printed on light colored paper.
AVAILABLE FROM Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups' Educational Improvement, Vidyanagar, Kolhapur, India 416 004 ($7.50 or Rs. 60).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Literacy; *Disadvantaged Youth; Economically Disadvantaged; Educational Improvement; *Educational Innovation; Educationally Disadvantaged; *Educational Needs; *Elementary Education; *Equal Education; Foreign Countries; Intervention; Program Descriptions; Program Development; *Program Implementation; Social Problems; Test Construction; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS *India

ABSTRACT

After listing the aims and objectives of the Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups' Educational Improvement (ISDGEI), in Kolhapur, India, this collection of seven articles discusses prospects, problems, and successes of providing universal elementary education to the children of India. Articles: (1) discuss quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the Indian educational system; (2) indicate some of the principal factors involved in the failure to fulfill the constitutional obligation to provide universal elementary education, and identify steps to be taken to improve the situation; (3) list principles of the United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of the Child; (4) sketch the expansion of volunteer activity in India; (5) outline ways distance education can address demands made on the educational system; (6) describe the construction of a non-formal measure of adult learners' progress in literacy; and (7) describe successes and difficulties experienced in implementing a kindergarten program in the context of 100 percent illiteracy in an urban slum, the expansion of the program, salient features of the instructional techniques employed in the schools of the ISDGEI, approaches to changing students' behavior, teaching standard Marathi, improving children's language skills, providing multiple points of entry into the program, introducing vocational education, the partition of the program into separate units for infants and children of different ages and for different educational purposes, and other activities. (RH)

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UNIVERSALIZATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION:

Some issues

COMPLIMENTARY COPY

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Director,
Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups'
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Vidyanagar, Kolhapur - 416 004.

: Editor :
SULOCHANA SREEDHAR

© Authors

Price : Rs. 60/- or U. S. Dollar 7.50

First Published September 21-87

☐ Publisher : Institute for Socially Disadvantaged Groups' Educational Improvement.
☐ Printed in India by Rtn. Satish Padhye at the Garjana Mudranalaya, Kolhapur 416 012.

Acknowledgment

This SOUVENIR entitled 'Universalization of Primary Education: some issues,' was planned to be released on the eve of the inauguration of class 1 of the educational complex at the Kanjarbhat Motinagar slum. For a variety of reasons beyond our control, this could not be brought out earlier. And the class 1 started functioning without any formal inauguration.

The Institute is grateful to a number of individuals and organizations for their active support both in bringing out this issue and also in the day to day functioning of the Institute's academic programmes. To mention every one by name would be an endless list. Special mention, however, would have to be made to the Chairpersons and the the members of the two Advisory Bodies of this Institute, whose names appear on cover page 2, for their guidance to us and we are grateful to all of them. The authors who contributed articles to this souvenir owe our special thanks; without their support and co-operation this issue would not have seen the light of the day.

We are grateful to Shri Susheelkumar Shinde, Hon'ble Minister for Finance Government of Maharashtra for his support to us and for the good will message. Gratitude is also to be expressed to the advertizers whose support enabled us to meet partly the expenses connected with this publication and also to all the well wishers of the Institute who had extended their support to us at different times in different ways. At the organizational level, we received support from: UNICEF, Delhi, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, Delhi, NCER & T, Delhi, The Lions and the Lioness clubs and the Rotary and Inner Wheel clubs. We are thankful to the authorities and the office bearers of all these organizations. Finally we thank Rtn Satish Padhye, and his staff of the Garjana Mudranalaya for the excellent execution of this work.

Kolhapur 416 004
September, 21-87

Editor
on behalf of the ISDGEI

मंत्री
वित्त, नियोजन, उद्योग आणि विधि व न्याय
महाराष्ट्र शासन
मंत्रालय, मुंबई ४०० ०३२
दिनांक : २९ एप्रिल, १९८७

इन्स्टिटयूट फॉर सोशिअली डिसॲडव्हान्टेज्ड ग्रुप्स एज्युकेशनल इम्प्रुव्हमेंट या कोल्हापूर येथील संस्थेच्या विद्यमाने येत्या जून महिन्यात प्राथमिक शाळेचा शुभारंभ आणि ज्ञानवंचित या शैक्षणिक शोध निबंध असलेल्या स्मरणिकेचा प्रकाशन समारंभ असे दोन समारंभ आयोजिण्यात येत आहेत हे वाचून आनंद झाला.

समाजातील दुर्बल घटकांची रंजल्या गांजल्यांची सेवा करणे हा एक मोठा आचारधर्म आपण मानतो. आपली सांस्कृतिक परंपरा आणि अध्यात्मिक परंपरा शतकानुशतके भारतीय जनमानसावर या मानवी सेवेची थोरवी बिंबवित आहे. आजच्या परिस्थितीत या सेवेचे माध्यम आणि साधन बदलू शकते. परंतु त्यामागील हेतू निश्चितच उदात्त ठरतो. आपली संस्था तळागाळातल्या आणि सामाजिक व आर्थिकदृष्टया दुर्बल घटकातील लोकांचा शैक्षणिक विकास घडवून आणण्याच्या दृष्टीने जे प्रयत्न करीत आहे ते खरोखरीच कौतुकास्पद आहेत. शैक्षणिक उपक्रम, मोफत वैद्यकिय शिबिरांचे आयोजन, सामाजिक वनीकरण, व्यावसायिक शिक्षण अशा प्रकारच्या उपयुक्त उपक्रमांचे आयोजन करून आपली संस्था दुर्बल घटकातील लोकांना स्वावलंबी बनविण्याच्या दृष्टीने उत्कट कार्य करीत आहे. आपल्या या प्रयत्नांना मी सुयश चिंतून या संस्थेचे कार्यक्षेत्र उत्तरोत्तर प्रगल्भ आणि विस्तृत होईल अशी शुभकामना व्यक्त करतो.

(सुशीलकुमार शिंदे)

Chairman
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Hony. Fellow

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MESSAGE

Learning is both a right of every child and an opportunity to work and play with others. This right is now available to the Motinagar Balwadi and the children attending it, thanks to the devoted labour and vision of one man Dr. Sreedhar. So in the work and play available to the children, the Director's person and personality should be one of the themes, in order that it may be imitated and copied by all of us.

Malcolm S. Adiseshiah

A. K. NANDA KUMAR
Collector & District Magistrate,
Kolhapur.

Phone : 24811 (O)
26006 (R)
Kolhapur - 416 003
Date : 11-9-1987

MESSAGE

The experiment which is currently being carried out by Dr. & Smt. Sreedhar is unique in many ways. They are trying to disprove many of the traditional beliefs regarding less advantaged groups. What is really note worthy is their total dedication and selfless devotion to the project. Because of their constant persistence a group which has always been regarded as being anti-social has developed implicit faith and trust in them. Dr. & Smt. Sreedhar have been able to reach into the minds and hearts of these persons in a way in which very few persons have done so far. They have also been able to effectively co-ordinate various agencies, social service organisations and educational institutions and have motivated them to participate in this activity. I take this opportunity to wish them and their project all success.

A. K. Nanda Kumar
Collector of Kolhapur

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Date 18-3-87

MESSAGE

For the first time in the Academic history of India, a linguist has successfully tackled the problem of the children of the slum and I wish more cities adopt the exemplary work of Dr. M. V. Sreedhar.

V. I. Subramoniam

Dr. P. L. MALHOTRA
Director

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Dpsee / 87

Dear Dr. Sreedhar,

Thank you for your letter No. F. 2-AB-86-87 dated March 3, 1987, as well as for the report of the activities undertaken by your organization. It is heartening to find that earnest and sincere efforts are being made by your organization to reach education to the needy and the disadvantaged. I wish you all success.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
(P. L. Malhotra)

INSTITUTE FOR
SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS' EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

VIDYANAGAR, KOLHAPUR- 416 004.

1) Aims and objectives :

i) To conduct research and undertake other programmes for the educational development of the children from the socially disadvantaged groups like : urban slum dwellers, scheduled caste communities and the other working class families,

ii) To provide equalities of ability to the children and adults from the socially disadvantaged groups in the area of education including language skills for competing with their middle class counterparts by attempting to bridge the gap between the language use and the sub-cultural pattern at home of the disadvantaged children and the school and/or in the other places.

iii) To initiate and conduct research in the area of the verbal repertoire including the language skills and the primary socialization processes the children undergo during the pre-school days and at different age-groups.

iv) To undertake research programmes to determine the right type of socialization process.

v) To initiate and start through non-formal education, orientation programmes in the right type of socialization process to the mothers of the socially disadvantaged children

vi) To initiate and start complementary language programmes for the development of the language skills of the socially disadvantaged children.

vii) To provide pre-primary, primary, secondary and the other higher educational facilities for the socially disadvantaged groups.

viii) To initiate and undertake intervention programmes in improving the language skills particularly in Marathi and English languages (and also in the mothertongue of the children whose mothertongue is not Marathi) of the socially disadvantaged children at different stages like : vii, ix, xi standards etc.

ix) To provide orientation courses/special coaching classes for the socially disadvantaged groups for competing in different examinations conducted by the UPSC, State Service Commission, etc.

x) To train pre-primary and primary teachers in the area of Sociology of Education. In this, preference would be given to those who are already serving or are prepared to serve in pre-primary / primary schools having predominantly children from the socially disadvantaged groups,

xi) To organize in-service training programmes to the teacher educators in the area of Sociology of Education, with special reference to the educational problems of the socially disadvantaged children so as to meet the National requirements of the teachers specially trained to handle the problems of the socially disadvantaged groups.

xii) To provide hostel, boarding etc., to the children and adults taking advantage of the Institute.

xiii) To implement the Government schemes with regard to the education of the slum area, Scheduled Caste areas/colonies and of the other disadvantaged groups.

xiv) To organize and hold seminars, conferences, workshops, camps, etc., on various aspects in which the Institute is engaged in conducting research cum teaching and to publish the proceedings of such seminars, workshops, etc.

xv) To prepare text-books, mannuals, research reports etc., in respect of the educational problems and the other related themes of the socialy disadvantaged groups and publish such books.

xvi) To produce and provide video programmes on language differences amongst children from different social strata and on ideal socialization process.

xvii) to help socially disadvantaged groups to become self reliant by organising co-operative movement amongst them in different fields and

xviii) To do and perform all legal acts ancillary and consistent with the objectives of the Institute.

2) The constitution of the institute provides two levels of advisory bodies. These are : (a) an Academic Body at the National level and (b) a Local Body at the Kolhapur regional level.

Academic Body of the Institute :

i) **Membership** : The Institute would have a fifteen member Academic Body. The membership may be drawn from the entire country and would include : linguists, educationists, juvenile writers, social workers etc., and a few ex-officio members from the Governmental set-up.

ii) **Function** : The main function of the Academic Body would be to advise on all matters pertaining to the academic work of the Institute. The Academic Body would meet once in a year for reviewing the work already done and the work proposed to be done in the following year.

3) Local Body :

The Institute would also have a Local Body consisting of academicians, social workers and a few officials and non-officials from the Kolhapur region for advising and assisting the Director of the Institute in the day to day activities of the Institute. The Local Body would ordinarily meet once in three months. (List of the members of the two Advisory Bodies is given on the cover page 2)

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Children along with some teachers of the educational complex at the Kanjarbhat Motinagar slum and others.
Last row (L to R) Smt. Rekha Mane, Smt. Padmavati Kalkutaki, Kum. Bharati Salokhe (teachers) Smt. Sulochana Sreedhar, Dr. K. S. Haldikar, Dr. M. V. Sreedhar, Mayor Shri P. T. Patil, Corporator Shri Shivajirao More, Rtn. Ashok Bidkar, Corporator Shri Bapusahib Mohite, Rtn. Uday Kamat & Kadam Bagade, Leader of the slum.

Shri P. T. Patil, Mayor of Kolhapur City planting a Mango sapling in the Kanjarbhat Motinagar slum. Dr. K. S. Haldikar is also seen.

Mayor Shri P. T. Patil pouring water after planting a sapling. Rtn. Uday Kamat, Dr. K. S. Haldikar, Rtn. Ashok Bidkar Rtn. Milind Alwekar, Corporator Bapusahib Mohite, Corporator Shivajirao More are also seen.

Rtn. Ashok Bidkar, President, Rotary Club of Shiroli, MIDC planting a mango sapling in in the Kanjarbhat Motinagar slum.

Editorial

Sulochana M. Sreedhar.

A consideration that weighed most with this Institute in publishing this SOUVENIR was to bring the innovative programmes of this Institute to the notice of a wide section of the people including the scholars working in the area of Universalization of elementary Education (UEE). It is felt that this Souvenir would be instrumental in pooling of and sieving in of the experiences of different scholars / organizations working in the area of UEE which in its turn would help in arriving at some solution to the alarming problem of the incidence of the phenomena of stagnation and wastage in education found to occur at the primary level. Incidentally, the vast majority of those who form the ' out of school ' and the 'drop outs' category belong to the Socially Disadvantaged groups like : the members of the S. C. & S. T. communities, urban slum dwellers and the other working class. A popular nomenclature for all these groups is : ' the weaker sections of the Society '

This Souvenir therefore addresses a variety of social issues that influence the development and learning of children from infancy. The social structure and the social forces to which a child belongs to, predicts and quite often determines the chances of success or failure of a child in its pursuit of education.

Offering free and compulsory eduation to every child until the age of 14 years is a constitutional obligation and a national Commitment. And this commitment of the Nation should have been fulfilled by the year 1961. The Indian Educational System has unfortunately failed to fulfil this Constitutional obligation as well as the National commitment. A major consequence of this failure on the part of the educational system is that every unschooled child and every school drop of today becomes the adult illiterate of tomorrow. The adult illiterates in India have already reached an exploding figure of 437 million in 1981 from that of 300 million in 1947. According to an estmiate of the World Bank, the adult illiterates in India would cross 500 million by the turn of 2000 A. D. forming 54.6 per cent of the total illiterates in the world.

A report on the Academic activties of the Institute for the Socially Disadvantaged Groups' Educational Improvement (ISDGEI) appears in this Souvenir. If the activities and the academic programmes of the ISDGEI are viewed in the light of such a dismal performance of the Educational System in India, it could be clearly seen that the ISDGEI, is contributing its mite significantly in achieving the targets laid down in the National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE) through both the formal and non formal education. With reference to the Non Formal Education, The PROGRAMME OF ACTION (1986) clearly mentions that despite substantial progress in education through formal system, a large number of children continue to be in the category of " left outs and drop outs. " It implies that we may not be able to achieve our plan objectives by depending exclusively on the formal system. Therefore, we should side by side explore alternative channels to cater to these groups. In this context, the Non formal Education is going to be an important means through which the policy envisages to cater to their requirements. This is dictated by the hard realities of economics. The NPE 1986 has therefore resolved to ensure that all children who attain the age of 11 years by 1990 would have had atleast five years of schooling through either formal or non formal education.

Though the ISDGEI has started working intensively in a slum on the outskirts of the Kolhapur City, the experiences gained through its research cum teaching programmes on a limited target population could easily be transferred to a wider target population. The activities of the ISDGEI, would also have a multiplier effect through the teacher training programmes it proposes to undertake for the teachers intending to work in the schools having children predominently from the weaker sections of the society including the urban slums.

The articles included in this SOUVENIR have both direct and indirect relation to the theory and practice in the area of UEE. For instance, the social structure in India has always been and continue to be inegalitarian, despite the Constitution of India declaring India as a Socialist Republic and guarantees equality of opportunities to every one. The inegalitarian social structure in India is also reflected in the educational system of India which considers that its main function is the preservation and the spreading of the values of the mainstream culture, i. e., the middle class. The Indian educational system, therefore, perpetuates the inegalitarian social structure including the caste system rather than paving the way for an egalitarian society.

Adiseshia and Sreedhar have highlighted this major short coming of the Indian Educational System, which according to them, makes the system almost irrelevant to meet the present social expectations and requirements. Adiseshia has further felt the need for the closing down of all the Universities for two years during which period the students involved may be sent to practical field work / experience which he feels would enable them to become more useful citizens of India; simultaneously, during that period, he envisages the utilization of the services of the teachers who are compulsorily freed from the teaching assignment for updating the curriculum to meet the present needs of India, a major recommendation of the Education Commission (1964-66) which has been ignored by the Academic Faculty in the universities for so long.

Sreedhar considers the socialization process the children from the weaker sections undergo coupled with the linguistically naive teachers' attitude towards such children as the major factors for alienating the children from this section from the middle class biased school ultimately leading to the withdrawal of such children from the school system altogether. Sreedhar further claims that a child from the weaker sections when compared to its middle class counterpart enters the class 1 at the age of 5 + on an unequal footing owing to the type of socialization process it had undergone during the pre school days at home. This unequal footing arises because the school system considers the social inheritance of the children from the weaker sections as deficit and irrelevant for the school and hence these children are unfit for education. As long as this attitude prevails, the children from the weaker sections would be considered as uneducable. Sreedhar therefore strongly pleads for offering inservice training for the linguistically naive teachers in the area of Sociology of Education including an orientation course in different aspects of language varieties and language use. He further pleads that the children from the weaker sections should be given equality of abilities, to compete with their middle class counterparts, if the education is to make any relevance to them. Otherwise, the entire investment made in achieving the targets of the NPE 1986 would be a waste as in the present Indian context the issue of the UEE applies only to the children from the the weaker sections. As long as these children are not given the opportunity to acquire the equality of abilities to compete with their middle class counterparts, the EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY guarenteed in the Indian Constitution would remain a dead letter to almost all the members of the weaker sections of the society.

Carter has given prominence to the right of the child including their right to social security, education and protection. He has also listed ten principles from the declarations of the right of the child (United Nations 1958) and also the articles on education and preparation for life. Sasmeeta Srivastav considers the voluntary organizations as a bridge between the government and the people. This opinion has to be seen in the light of the admission of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Programme of Action 1986) that the present facilities at the primary level would have to be increased by one and a half times for achieving the targets laid down in the NPE 1986 for the UEE. Since the Ministry considers this as almost impossible for it to provide, the Ministry hopes that the majority of the children would have to be educated through the non formal education. And a major burden in this would have to be borne by the voluntary organizations. Srivastav also referred to the pioneering work done by the voluntary organizations in the area of child welfare and the help rendered by the Central Social Welfare Board to the voluntary organizations which in its turn led to a solid support to the governmental agencies in their developmental and welfare efforts.

In many Western countries, particulally in the United Kingdom, many candidates take advantage of the facilities under the Open University Scheme. The Open School system is its counterpart at the secondary level. Since the Government of India itself feels that for achieving the targets laid down for the UEE, a major chunk of the student population at the secondary level would have to be channelized through the non formal stream, the facilities available under the Open School system should be widely publicized. Unfor-

unately, the efforts of the ISDGEI in getting information from the different governmenta agencies at Bombay and Delhi have drawn a blank. Sreedhar refers to the adoption of the Open school system by the ISDGEI but does not go in details. Valicha's article therefore is a major contribution in this area. Whatever he has stated about the distance education at the University level could be easily adopted at the secondary level also. The Open school system could even be adopted at the primary level, but under the active guidance of a researcher. The ISDGEI is making an experiment in this area at the lower primary level. Providing multiple point of entry at the school is a major advantage of adopting the open school system.

While referring to the N. F. E., the CHALLENGE OF EDUCATION 1985 had mentioned that as then there were no means of assessing the impact of the N. F. E. on educational system particularly in the area of cost effectiveness. Gogate's article therefore is a major contribution in that area as it is based on field testing in a vareity of situations.

The ISDGEI would feel gratified, if the articles in this SOUVENIR provoke the scholars and the educational administrators to view the present educational system a bit more critically and take appropriate remeidial steps, on the lines suggested in this Souvenir rather than undertaking a mere plastic surgery, so that the Indian Educational System could come upto the expectations and aspirations of the Nation. It is only then the National commitment to offer free and compulsory education to every child until the age of 14 years would be fulfilled.

Jai Hind

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Smt Sulochana M. Sreedhar is a teacher in the P. G. Department of Eduction, Sh vaji University Kolhapur. She also had some formal training in Linguistics. She has more than ten years of teaching cum reserach experience to her credit. Of late she has been specializing on the educational issues of the socially disadvantaged children. The topic for her Ph. D. thesis also pertains to this area.

In the course of her visit to the Bristol University, Bristol for participating in an International Conference on ' Social Psychology & Language ' she took time off to visit the University of London Institute of Education, for having extensive discussions with the staff of the Department of the Sociology of Education with reference to the research works on the educational issues of the working class.

She is a member of the Maharshtra State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Bombay. She is also connected with various women's organizations inclucing the Mahila Dakshata Samiti, Shivaji University mahila mandal, ISDGEI, etc.

The Educational Morass and the way out

Malcolm S. Adiseshiah

Two Dimensions

Our Educational system must be viewed and analysed along two dimensions- quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative dimension is the number of persons involved in institutions under different types of management, at different levels of learning, in different disciplines and specialities and with finances from different sources made available to it. The qualitative dimension is the manner in which the system is successfully or otherwise carrying out its objectives.

Quantitative

Our Education today enrol 7.1 crores students in the primary cycle, which is 83.6 per cent of the age group 6-11 in the country, 1.95 crores students in the upper primary, which is 40.2 per cent of the relevant age group 11-14, 0.9 crores in the secondary and higher secondary schools which is 20 6 per cent of the age group 14-17, 0.35 crores in various forms of third level education, which is 4.1 per cent of the age group 17-23, and 0.5 crores receiving various forms of adult education as against the 65 per cent adult illiterates in the country. The educational system enterprise is thus a massive enterprise involving the care of about 10 crores of learners, and 0.3 crores of teachers, ranging over this vast land of 22 states and 9 union territories.

In this quantitative analysis of the Indian educational scene, certain hidden features need to be brought out into open. First the enrolment figures for each level of education given earlier is the enrolment on the first day of the opening of academic year in each institution and is in a sense a false, idealised statistic. The government itself admits that out of every 10 students who are enrolled in class I of the primary school only 4 complete

class V, so that 60 per cent of enrolled students are dropouts and pushouts. Again by class X, the drop out rates reaches 80 per cent, so that the average daily attendance in our schools and universities is less than half of the 10 crores of students referred to earlier.

A second hidden element within the above limitation, is the enrolment percentage of girls at each level, instead of being equal to that of the boys, is about half of that of the latter and declines sharply with each higher level of education. It is half that of boys at 27.7 per cent at the upper primary, one third of the boys at 10 per cent at the secondary and one fourth of the boys enrolment at 1 per cent at college and university education.

A third feature of the quantitative made here is the uneven educational progress of the states of the Indian union. Nine of the 17 major states are backward in the enrolment of students and have, according to the latest information made available to parliament, a drop out rate at the elementary stage ranging from 66 to 86 per cent. The nine states are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, West Bangal and Uttar Pradesh. The educationally advanced states, including those making a more even provision for the girls, are Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu with Gujarat, Maharasthra and Himachal Pradesh following quite closely.

A fourth problem relates to the financing of the education system, which now amounts to Rs. 3000 crores per annum, and which raises a host of issues, of which I shall deal with only three. The benefit cost studies that I have undertaken of our educational expenditures, in one case at the request of a state government, even allowing for the admitted limitations of the methodology show that in the general arts fields in secondary education and the arts under graduate courses in university and college education, the social costs are rising and the social benefits are falling steeply, suggesting the need to cut back on this area of educational expenditure. A second issue is that in regard to professional education, where benefits could exceed costs, the brain drain of our medical and engineering scientists results in heavy social costs with declining social benefits. A recent WHO survey states that India is the largest donor of medical manpower to industrialised and other countries, with at present 150,000 Indian physicians working abroad. A UN survey reports a similar migration of our top engineers - so that on these two groups of manpower, the benefit from the expenditure of Rs. 240 crores incurred in training them accrues to the US, UK and the industrialised countries - a kind of technical assistance in reverse. A third problem is that given the fact that the majority of those who complete school and college are from the well to do sections of society, the public subsidy of education, particularly higher education, is in effect a transfer of resources from the poor to the rich - explained by the fact that 80 per cent of our tax revenues is from indirect taxes which are in the main paid by the poor majoriry.

Qualitative

The qualitative dimension of Indian education is measured by the extent to which it is executing the objectives of the Indian educational system.

The primary educational objectives-which can be derived from our constitution and legislation are : a) egalitarianism - education for all both in opportunity and outcomes : b) improved general and professional learning : c) services to the community : and d) development of character. The secondary objective include free and compulsory education, radical reconstruction and transformation of education, science education, cultural learning and adult education. These objectives need to be translated into (a) approved policies and programmes which embody the objectives, which is the responsibility of parliament and state legislatures and the union and state governments, b) adequate resources-financial, material and human-to execute the programmes, which again is the responsibility of the legislatures and executive and c) above all if there is a society in which equality, secularism, socialism, integrity and character are the accepted and established values within which education can function to carry out the objectives listed earlier. This does not mean that the education system cannot itself be a pace settor and a contributor to the attainment of the values of equality and justice, on national integration and secularism, and of truth and integrity. What it does mean is that the educational system cannot contribute to equality in an unequal society, it cannot contribute to integration and secularism in a caste ridden, communally dominated community, it cannot stand for honesty and integrity in a corruption ridden ethos.

Our present status

And so looking at our educational system I would say that the system has not taken off from the point of view of the objectives referred to above (except in regard to engineering, agricultural and medical education), and has taken off in the wrong direction from the point of view of the transformation of the system, its relevance to our needs, qualitative improvement of teaching and learning, and service to the community. This under developed, if not mal developed, educational system is seen in the growing gap between our educational plans and our educational achievements as in executing the pledge contained in article 45 of the constitution (the performance gap), in the yawning gap between policy pronouncements and actual implementation as in the declared objective of a radical reconstruction of education and the continuing with the past model (the communication gap); the gap between the new tasks facing the country as the need for learning which is relevant to the needs of the economy and the ad hoc crisis like response to them which results in turning out educated persons who are unemployable (the response gap); the contrast between the aims and objectives as in the goal of life long education and the rules, procedures and programmes established to attain it which results in our having half the world's adult illiterates of 750 million (the attainment gap); and the contradiction between the proposed democratization of education as the Plans for equalising educational opportunities and outcomes as between children of the well to do and weaker sections of society and the actual outcomes of the system wherein 80 per cent of high school and college competers are from the top 20 per cent of our society (the integrity gap).

An educational pause or reduced goals

In this situation of our education, I see two rather harsh alternatives. One is to stop further expansions of the school system and close down our universities and colleges

(except the professional institutions) for two years, and send the students to work on community projects in the rural and urban slum areas, for which they could be given academic credit, particularly the 2nd and 3rd year under graduates : at the end of the period they can be given diplomas which will be more employment generating and knowledge creating than the present diplomas : and during the two years they can be paid the wages as paid to similar workers : with the result that the students can both put to practical use such knowledge as they have gained and get to know something of the physical, environmental and societal realities of our villages and urban slums, realities to which they can later relate their learning if they pursued full time learning. Meanwhile the teachers who are not supervising the students and the educational managers can be used by legislatures and governments during the two years pause to plan and effect the radical reconstruction of education set forth in the Kothari Commission report as updated in the Sixth Plan document, where in addition to updated subject and disciplinary learning and over and above the classical stages of education, programmes of integrated rural development, non formal education, open learning systems and community education based on joint planning and work by those engaged in research and action in pedagogy, agriculture, health, labour, social welfare and the human, social and physical sciences will be undertaken. Back of this shock treatment of an educational pause, is my hope that during this two years, our students and others will join adults in helping society itself to move a little in the direction of the socialism, secularism and democracy, based on integrity and truth that we have laid down for ourselves in the constitution. Only then can we have a successful and radical reconstruction of the educational system which parliament and the legislatures can enact. If this is too harsh a course to follow, the other alternative is for the legislatures and government to cut back on our high sounding goals, to set primary objectives and tasks and secondary objectives and tasks for education based on the nature of our current society and which with our resources-physical, financial and human-our educationists can execute fully and faithfully, and not continue the living contradiction between profession and practice that they are obliged to represent today. This, in a sense, is what we are attempting in the New Education Policy which was approved by both houses of Parliament in May, 1986. We are now awaiting the action proposals which will translate the policy into action to be undertaken by the educational institutions, by the local authorities, by the state government and its agencies and by the union government and its agencies.

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Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, born on April, 18-1910, had his Master's and Doctorate degrees in Economics from the Kings College, Cambridge. Some of the important positions he is holding/held by him are mentioned below :

He was elected President of the Governing Board of the UNESCO / International Institute of Educational Planning in 1961 for a five year term and was re-elected for another five year period ending in 1991. He is also the Chairman of the Madras Institute of Developmental Studies, Madras since 1978. Concurrently, since 1984 he is the President of the Tamilnadu State Council for Science and Technology; Member, the U. N. International Committee of Consultants on environment; Coordinator, UNESCO working group on New International Economic Order.

He served the UNESCO, Paris from 1948 to 1970, first as the Director, Department of Technical Assistance and later as the Dy Director General, UNESCO; Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras from 1975-78; Rajyasabha Member from 1978-84; President, Indian Economic Association; President, International Council of Adult Education; President, Asian Association of Social Science Research council; Chairman Review Committee of the I. C. S. S. R., Delhi; Chairman of the Panel on the review of the functioning and further development of the departments of Social Sciences, in Andhra University, waltair and of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay.

He was a member of different academic bodies like : Central Advisory Board of Education, Delhi Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO, Delhi; NCER & T, Delhi; National Council for Technical Education, Delhi etc.

He is the author of an enviable number of top quality publications on various themes like : Banking rural credit, money, agricultural transformation etc. Of these, the two books entitled 'Let my country awake' and 'It is time to begin' published by the UNESCO are the hall mark of his academic achievement, in the area of education, science, culture and development.

He had travelled extensively the world over and had developed programmes of technical and financial assistances for 12 countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. In recognition of his academic services, he was decorated by 40 countries and was conferred honorary Doctorate by 15 Universities abroad.

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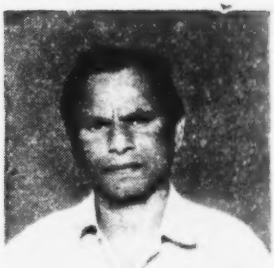

Universalization of Elementary Education : Where have we failed ?

M. V. Sreedhar

As was expected, the National Policy on Education (N. P. E.) 1986 laid special emphasis on Universalization of Elementary Education (U. E. E.) and set 1990 as the target year for achieving it. This target has provoked a great measure of controversy and scepticism with reference to the feasibility of achieving the target, particularly because, the ten year target laid down by the Constitution of India for offering free and compulsory education has been moved further and further on account of the failure arising out of sheer lack of a strategy and seriousness on the part of the government and its agencies involved in implementing the policies on education. The present target for the U. E. E. is also as unrealistic as the 1968 Policy which laid down a target of diverting 50 per cent of the SSC students at +2 stage in five years time from then.

At this juncture, it might be pertinent to recall that the article 45 of the Directive Principles of the Constitution of India has laid down that ' the state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until the age of 14 years. ' In other words, this endeavour ought to have been completed by the year 1961 so that by now every one born after 1950 should have received education for atleast 8 years and further every child in India should now be receiving education in a school. Instead one finds a complete paradox as far as the primary education is concerned, i. e., whereas there has been a tremendous increase in enrolment at the primary level, the number of children not attending the school has also increased with the result that there are more children out of the school system today than at any time before.

At the current pattern of enrolment and the rate of drop outs at the schools, it can be reckond that by 1990, when the population in the 6-14 age group is projected to touch 174 million, as many as 146 million children in India would remain unschooled. The

Programme of action 1986 ' clearly states that of the 64 million children who would fall in 6-11 age group during the coming five years, with the existing facilities, not more than 25 million can be given school education. It also states, that the government would be hard pressed to set up one and a half times more schools within five years which alone could meet the needs of the remaining 39 million children.

Since the N. P. E. 1986 has remained a non starter, despite the projected target of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Delhi, in reality, even at the most optimistic calculations, by the year 2000 A. D., not more than half a million school going children may get ready for a flight to 21 st Century, while the rest would be left stranded to join the mounting millions of illiterates in India- estimated by the World Bank to be about 500 million by the turn of 2000 A. D., forming 54.8 per cent of the total adult illiterates in the world. That would then be a very poor harvest of nearly five decades of education in India. Before we proceed further, let us have a cursory glance at the efforts of the educational system in providing facilities for primary education in free India.

Primary Education : facillties

The post independent India made significant strides in providing educational facilities to every one including the children from the socially disadvantaged groups by opening primary schools even in remote villages. During the last four decades, the number of educational institutions in India increased from 2.3 lakhs to 6.9 lakhs of which 5.04 lakhs consisting of 73 per cent of the total educational institutions are primary schools. Coupled with this, the popular demand for expansion of education grew at a terrific speed. The children of certain groups who had never been to schools began to enter its portals in large numbers. There was thus a virtual explosion in enrolment in schools at all stages. Now most children have a primary school within one K. M. from their huts/homes; yet there are more children outside the school system now than at any time before owing to the occurrence of the high incidence of the phenomena of stagnation and wastage in education That is, of those who enter class 1 in a primary school, just about 50 per cent complete class iv (L P School) and only 23 out of 100 children entering class 1 complete class vii (higher primary school). The drop out rate for the girls is 70 per cent. And a minimum of 4-5 years of education is required for retaining functional literacy.

Incidentally, a majority of the school drop outs belong to the Socially Disadvantaged groups like; the members of the S C & S. T. groups, urban slum dwellers and the other working class groups (also known as the weaker sections of the society), wheras the education of the weaker sections of the society is a special responsibility of the Government For instance, the Article 46 of the Directive Principles of the Constitution of India inter alia states that the State will promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of people and in particular of the S. C. s. and S. T. s. The Indian educationists have so far miserably failed to discharge these constitutional responsibilities entrusted to them owing to their disinclination to make any attempt in changing the present class based education to a mass based one, though the Education Commission (1964-66) had strongly recommended such a course. The N. P. E. 1986 has also stressed

on this point. But the single point of entry at the school system and the stereotyped attitudes of the teachers towards the capabilities of the children from the weaker sections are the two principal causes for the stagnation and wastage in education from amongest them. The failure of the children from these groups in not benefitting from formal education despite the availability of physical facilities and the huge budgetary provisions - the budget for education in India is next only to the Defence – must therefore be attributed solely to the failure of the Indian educationists to adjust to the wide spread cataclysmic social change taking place in India. These points need clarification.

There has been hardly any change in the educational pattern from the time of Lord Maculey. The educational system introduced by him had a purpose or relevance then. The system had met adequately the demands made on it till the indepedence of India. Though the old system has become irrelevant in the changed socio - political context, no more than lip sympathies are made for a change in the sytem to make it relevant to the present social needs. For instance, our educational system is largely relevant and responsive to the aspirations of the urban middle class and not to the new entrants from the weaker section and from the rural areas. Since education is the most effective means of equalizing opportunities between human beings, in a democratic set up like ours, the aim of the education must be to enlarge the coverage and improve the quality of education so that every individual irrespective of his / her caste, creed, sex or economic strata could develop his / her potentials to the maximum. But as more and more segments of the society persues this outdated outmoded education, it seems to make them unfit for the occupations persued by these segments and make them aspire only for white collar jobs for which they are unable to compete with their middle class urban elite counterparts. When the present education system is looked at from this angle, its irrelevance to meet the needs of the Nation becomes quite obvious, as only the urban elite is benefitting from it. Despite the unemployment amongst the educated, there is a direct relationship between education and the social strata, i. e., the poorest of the segments of the society are the ones that has had no tradition of education and conversely those who form the higher strata of the society are the ones who have had a tradition of higher education. In other words, the children belonging to the higher strata of the society succeed in getting higher education while the disadvantaged ones mostly drop out early from the schools. It might be pertinent to examine the exact areas where the system has failed and to further examine the possible remedial steps that could be taken so as to approximate the goals set in the N. P. E. 1986 for achieving U. E. E.

Most of the studies dealing with the education of the children from the weaker sections of the society usually discuss almost exclusively the economic issues whereas poverty plays a negligible role in depriving education to the children from the weaker sections. It is proposed to discuss here only the three major factors that hinder the education of the children from the weaker sections. These are : (i) the type of socialization process a child undergoes at home during the pre-school days, (ii) the single point of entry at the schools and (iii) the uninformed teacher's prejudices against these children. Each of these factors are discussed below.

(i) Socialization Processes :

The children from different social groups undergo different types of socialization processes at home during their pre school days. These begin with the toilet habits. These differential socialization processes result in differences in the acquisition of verbal skills as well as values. The types of values and the verbal repertoire acquired during the pre school days in their turn determine the success or failure at the middle class biased schools. For instance, the reserach findings show that the degree of parent- child verbal interaction has a direct relation with a poor or rich verbal expression of the children. The differences in the parent- child verbal interaction could ordinarily be associated with two social classes, viz., members of the weaker sections including the slum dwellers and the middle class (M. C). While the former is associated with a low parent- child verbal interaction, the M. C. is associated with intensive communication matrix between the parent-child. A direct consequence of this is that the children from the weaker sections have a poor verbal repertoire which in its turn lead to a low cognitive abilities. Studies conducted by the Institute for Sociology of Education, University of London, revealed that the children from the higher strata of the society in London also showed poor verbal expression when the parent- child verbal interaction in certain families from the higher strata was low. In other words, the degree of parent- child communication matrix during the early childhood plays a significant role in the intellectual development of a child. And this is the Achillies heel for the children from the weakar sections. Another disturbing issue is that a child from the weaker section comes to the school with the attitudes, values and expectations acquired in the process of being socialized in its sub- culture which are different from that of the school. The school system considers these acquisitions of the socially disadvantaged child as irrelevant and inappropriate for its system as according to it, the transmission of the mainstream culture of the middle class is its main function.

Hence the children from the weaker sections on entering the middle class biased school at the age of 5 + years find a discrepency between their experience of the social control and communicative process within their homes and that of the communicative process at the school on the other hand. In other words, a child from the weaker sections experiences a discontinuity between the sub culture and language use at its home and that of the school. As opposed to this, in the case of a middle class child, the attitude, values, language variety etc acquired during the pre school days nearly tally with that of the school system and therefore, a middle class child succeeds at the school as it confronts materials that are congruent with its underlying skills. Therefore, when compared to a middle class child, the children of all social groups that have not acquired the middle class values and the middle class linguistic codes would find themselves at a disadvantage. As the days in the school go on, this disadvantage increases which ultimately forces such children out of the school system.

(ii) Single point of entry at the school :

The charecteristic feature of the middle class biased educational system is the single point of entry at the school and annual promotion / failure. If one looks at the implication of these features, one could find that these features are highly ineagaliterian and heavily

loaded against the weaker sections. For instance, the single point of entry implies that once a parent fails to admit his / her child in the school at a pre determined age, the child is denied formal education for the rest of the life or alternately, having got enrolled, if the child steps out of it for any reason, it would then be next to impossible for it to return to the system. This feature offers a child only a two - way opposition of **either** .... **or**, ie., **either** a full time education without doing any work **or** just work alone without any education. This **either** ..... **or** oppostion automatically deprives all workers including child labour any type of formal education.

The annual promotions based on terminal examinafions is highly disadvantageous to the weaker sections, as the children from these sections do not get any assistance from their parents in coping with the home work or in studies at home, whereas the middle class children get such help from the K. G. class onwards.[3]

(iii) The uninformed linguistically naive teachers' attitude :

It was mentioned earlier that in the area of language use, values etc a child from the weaker sections on entering the school at class 1 finds a discontinuity between its home and the school. The linguistically naive teachers consider the variety of language used by a child from the weaker sections as sub - standard. Further, since teacher is trained to gloss over the variations in language use, he / she puts every speech from into two pegeon holes of ' right ' or ' wrong '. Therefore, when these children use in the class room their home variety of language, they always find their language use in the ' wrong ' hole for which they are either punished or ridiculed in the open class room. What is ignored by these uninformed teachers is that the language is a label of indentity and the teacher who rejects the language variety of the child not only rejects its language variety but also all those who use the same variety, viz., the parents of the child, its peer group, friends, relatives etc. The child naturally gets alienated from the school.

The teachers, out of ignorance, attempt to teach the standard variety as a replacement variety rather than as an alternate variey. The goal of language instruction ought to be to offer the children language facility to switch over from one code/variety to another depending upon the situation. What is to be noted is that the crucial difference between a child from the weaker section and that of of a middle class child in language use is not merely in the range of vocabulary but sensitivity to a way of organizing and responding to experiences. Thus the ignorance of the teachers regarding the language use turns the linguistic differences into educational failure. (For the right type of appraoch in handling linguistic differences, please see the report of the academic activities of the ISDGEI appearing in this Souvenir).

The teachers, out of their ignorance of the principles of Sociology of Education and child psychology, generally condemn these children as unsuitable for education owing to their so- called low I. Q. arising ouf of their poor heridity. This opinion when communicated to a child, acts as ' Self fulfilling prophecy.' The child would thereafter never be able

to cross its performance level indicated by the teacher. Generally the teacher puts it at a very low level. As opposed to this practice in india, in the Western Countries, the principle of ' Self fulfilling prophecy ' is exploited to the maximum degree to improve the academic performance of the weak children.

In other words, the children from the weaker sections suffer in education not because of any cognitive defciency, rather because their life style language use etc are viewed as deficit by the uninformed linguistically naive teachers and school system, which are the most important representatives of the middle class society. Therefore, as long as this negative attitude of the uninformed teachers and the school sysem towards the children from the weaker sections remain unchanged, the U. E. E. in India would never be achieved.

Having mentioned some of the principal factors responsible for the failure of the educational system in fulfilling the constitutional obligation and the National commitment with reference to the U. E. E., it is proposed to discuss certain remedial steps which could enable the educational system to approximate the targets set for achieving the U. E. E.

1. Socialization process and the school system.

It was mentioned that the children from different social strata undergo different types of sociaization process during their pre school days. Since the school is the most important representative of the middle class society, the values and the language use of the middle class is reflected in and adopted by the school system. Therefore, a middle class child on entering the class 1 at the age of 5 + finds a continuity between his home and the school in respect of the values, language use etc which enables it to progess smoothly in its studies, whereas a child from the weaker section finds a discontinuity between its home and the school in respect of the language use and values and therefore is handicapped in his studies. In view of it, the starting point of the children from the two social groups differ. Since the starting points of the two social groups are different, when compared to a middle class child, a child from the weaker section enters the school on an unequal footing. Therefore until the children from the weaker sections are given equality of abilities to compete with their middle class counterparts, the fulfilment of the Constitutional obligation of offering free and compulsory educatjon to every child until the age of 14 years would be an **El Dorado.** And in the process, the EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY enshrined in the Constitution of India (Article 14) would also reamain a dead letter to a vast majority of the children and the adults from the weaker sections.

A possible remedial step to this is to offer a good pre - school programme to the children from the weaker sections where they would be encouraged to interact verbally with the teachers and other adult members freely which in its turn would enable them to achieve a kind of parity in the preparation for school that home, community and the relative affluence usually give to their middle class counterparts. Since it may be difficult to train the illiterate mothers in the right type of socialization process in which the children

are to be brought up, the teachers should be given pre - service orientation courses in this area. The teachers thereafter should take over the role of ' Communicative mothers ' in developing the language abilities and skills of the children. Children from 0.6 months of age till 5 years may be placed in such a pre - school programme. The ISDGEI is conducting such an experimental programme. (for details please see the academic report on the ISDGEI in this issue.)

Right at the moment, the educational system does not have such a facility, though the CHALLENG OF EDUCATION (1985, 4:75) feels that Anganwadis and Balwadis could reduce the incidence of the phenomena of stagnation and wastage in education whereas in reality, the Balwadis and Anganwadis under the government attempt no more than keeping the children away from their huts/homes. The experience has shown that the children remain in the class room as long as they get the free meals. When the free meals are discontinued for a fortnight or so, a common feature, one finds a deserted look in the Anganwadis. A principal reason for the Anganwadis' failure in coming upto the expectation of the Ministry of Human Resource Development is that none of the government officials in that set up has the pre-requisites for conducting an academic programme that would offer to the children from the weakar sections the equality of abilities to compete with their middle class counterparts A partial solution to this lacune is to divest the government officials of the Anganwadis of the responsibilities of preparing the children from the weaker sections to meet the challenges of the middle class biased schools and entrust this responsibility to voluntary organizations specializing in this area. In the initial stage an attempt in this direction may be made on an experimental basis in one or two regions.

2. Single point entry at the schools :

It was mentioned that the single point of entry at the primary school is the greatest stumbling block for the children from the weaker sections. This system suits perfectly well with the middle class children who have liesure and therefore are able to attend to full time studies at the pre determined age. We must therefore adopt multiple point of entry at the school through the OPEN SCHOOL SYSTEM. While the facilities available under the Open University is known to almost every one, there is hardly any information about the Open school system in India. It remained a non starter. The single point of entry must be replaced by a multipoint entry system under which childred in the age group of 8-12 could join the lower primary school. The ISDGEI is making such an experiment in a slum inhabited by illiterate criminals.

3. Teacher training prognammes :

There is an urgent need to set up separate institues to train teachers meant to cater exclusively to the needs of the children from the weaker sections, as the teacher training institutes in various universities / colleges in India have so far miserably failed to handle this Issue. In addition, the language teachers at the K. G. section and the primary section must necessariiy have to undergo an elementary course in linguistics which should include information on language varieties and language use in different domains.

4. Vocational courses :

In India, the technical and vocational education reached its zenith under the Muslim rulers during the medieval period. They helped to develop handicrafts and other industries. There were facilities for training in sculpture, embroidary, architecture etc. This eminent position of the vocational education did not last long

The Hunter Commission (1882) recommended the introduction of a two- channel education at the secondary level. While one channel offered general education leading to higher education, the other channel offered vocational courses of practical character terminating at matriculation examination. Though the enrolment to the second channel was just about 10 per cent of the total enrolment, this system continued upto 1965. While the Mudaliar Commission (1952) also felt the need for vocational courses, the Kothari Commission (1964-66) attached great significance to the development of vocational courses at the secondary stage. Despite the weightage envisaged to the vocationalization of education in the Education Policy 1968, the entire scheme remained a non starter.

This writer is of the firm opinion that the planning for the vocationalization of the education must commence from class 1 onwards. Depending upon the location, region and the parents' needs, the programme should be so planned that it should be possible to terminate the education at class iv, vii, x or xii.

The Government of India has already legalized the employment of 'child labour'. Our efforts must therefore be directed in increasing the productive efficiency of the child labour which in its turn would result in increased wages to them. If the attention of the parents are drawn to this aspect, the parents of the child labour in the rural areas and urban slums would be willing to send their children to the schools for atleast 4 - 5 years before placing the children in the employment market. In the process, those children would have attained functional literacy, which would help in reduing the number of adult illiterates in India. There is therefore, an urgent need for the revival, albeit with suitable modifications, of education in craft, work experience and dignity of labour along with the teaching of three Rs from class 1 onwards. The ISDGEI, Kolhapur is experimenting on these lines. It would be more beneficial to make these experiments through non formal education than the formal ones.

In conclusion, it might be stated that despite the tremendous increase in enrolment at the primary level, there are more children outside the school system now than at any time before. The pricipal culprits for brining this paradoxical situation are the uninformed linguistically naive teachers and the highly inegalitarian educational system in India. The latter is completely irrelevant to meet the changing socio political situation in India. For instance, whereas the Article 14 of the Constitution of India guarentees equality of opportunities to every citizen, the Indian educational system denies equality of access to the children from the weaker sections. When the Nation is committed to the value of equal opportunity to every one, it is the Nations sacred duty to provide certain levels of education to every child. This must necessarily include the offering of eqality of abilities to the

children from the weaker sections so as to enable them to compete with their middle class counterparts. Since the present educational system has failed to provide these, it is anachronistic.

In the present context of education, the issus of UEE pertains only to the children from the weaker sections (both unschooled and out of school ones). Every nerve must therefore be strained to take education to this segment of the population. A major chunk of them would have to be diverted to the non formal education system. Every child labour should also be brought under the non formal education system. Simultaneously, the outdated outmoded syllabi of the teacher training courses should be revised drastically so as to make the teachers competent to fulfil the Constitutional obligations and the National commitment with reference to the Universalization of Elementary Education.

Since the type of socialization process a child undergoes at home during the pre school days is the most significant varient that determines the success or failure at the school and since it would be difficult to train the illiterate mothers from the weaker sections, the teachers at the primary level should take over to themselves the role oi 'Communicative mothers' so as to help in developing the language skills and the verbal repertoire of the children from the weaker sections. Only through such a step these children could be helped to acquire the equality of abilities to compete with their middle class counterparts and in the process the high incidence of the phenomena of stagnation and wastage in education found to occur with this segment could also be reduced considerably. The single point of entry at the school system must give way to the multiple point of entry.

The technological innovations and the international rivalry and competitions damand educated man power for every country for its survival. The failure in India of the children from the weaker section in benefitting from the formal educational system represents a waste in future educated manpower in India. And this failure must be attributed solely to the inegaliterian educational system including the uninformed linguistically naive teachers' attitudes towards the deprived children. A point that needs to be emphasized is that any help rendered to the deprived children in improving their educational level is not an act of philanthrophy or pity but an act arising out of the 'enlightened self interest' of the Nation.

The need of the hour is to transform the educational system with a view to promoting productivitiy through technical and technological skills and the inculcation of the spirit of the dignity of labour. There is therefore an urgent need to revamp the educational system including the syllabi of the teacher training courses for approximating the targets set in the N. P. E. 1986 for achieving the Universalization of the Elementary Education.

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1. The figures quoted in this paper are from the two publications of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt of India, New Delhi. These publications are : (i) 'Challenge of Education : a policy perspective' August 1985 and (ii) 'Programme of Action' 1986.

2. In many States, the children are sent to the next higher class automatically till class IV or VII; but no special arrangements are made to enable the children to reach the class average, which in its turn creates psychological problems and also result in mass failure at the class IV or VII public examination.

□ □

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He has to his credit a large number of books and articles on various inter disciplinary subjects published both in India and abroad. His area of specialization is : Applied Sociolinguistics including Sociology of Education. He is presently the Director, Institute for the Socially Disadvataged Groups 'Educational Improvement, Vidyanagar, Kolhapur.

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The Rights of the Child, With Especial Reference To Education

A. G. T. Carter

In 1959, the UN General Assembly adopted unanimously the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. This Declaration sets out the rights of the child in ten principles covering such matters as their rights to social security, education and protection. These principles have provided clear guidelines ever since, although the Declaration is without formal obligation and its usefulness depends on a wide awareness or their contents to guide the actions not only of national governments but international organizations and individuals. The ten principles are given in Annex I; they are to be read and interpreted as a whole, but present readers will be particularly interested in Principle 7 which relates specifically to education.

In 1979, a Working Group of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was set up to prepare a draft Convention which would reflect, but in legally binding terms, the ten principles of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The range and complexity of the issues and the number of States and organizations involved has resulted in slow progress; but progress there has been, and most of the Articles of the draft Convention have now been completed and agreed by the Working Group. Two of these agreed Articles are those relating to education (Article 21) and preparation for life (Article 22), and these are given below in Annex II.

Even when the draft of the Convention is complete and approved by the Working Group, it will still need to be adopted by the United Nations and then ratified by individual States before its obligations become binding. No dramatic changes can therefore be expected to result from the Convention in the near future, but even the formulation of the Articles provides a focus of attention and discussion which is leading to a set of commonly agreed, widely known, and legally valid principles. With widespread support, the formal

acceptance ot Nations will promote and hasten the time when these principles are implemented in practice throughout the world.

It is noteworthy that the Declaration by the SAARC Summit meeting on 16 & 17 November 1987, the Heads of State or Government called for an early conclusion and adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

ANNEX I : The Ten Principles, From The Declaration Of The Rights Of The Child (United Nations, 1959)

Principle 1

The child shall enjoy all rights set forth in this Declartion. All children without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status whether of himself or of his family.

Principle 2

The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunies and facilities by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

Principle 3

The child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality.

Principle 4

The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end special care and protection shall be provided both to him and to his mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care. The child shall have the right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.

Principle 5

The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.

Principle 6

The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsiblity of his parents, and in any case in an atmosphere of affection and of moral and material security; a child of tender years shall not, save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother. Society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend

particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support. Payment of state and other assistance toward the maintenance of children of large families is desirable.

Principle 7

The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture, and enable him on a basis of equal opportunity to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral responsibility, and to become a useful member of society.

The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents.

The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as education; society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right.

Principle 8

The child shall in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief.

Principle 9

The child shall be protected against all froms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be the subject of traffic, in any form.

The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development.

Principle 10

The child shall be protected from practices which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discriminination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

ANNEX II : Articles On Education And Preparation For Life, From The Draft Convention On The Rights Of The Child

EDUCATION

Article 21

The States Parties to the present Convention recognize the right of the child to

education and, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular :

a) make primary education free and compulsory as early as possible.

b) encourage the development of different forms of secondary education systems, both general and vocational, to make them available and accessible to all children, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need.

c) make higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner reflective of the child's human dignity.

3. The States Parties to the present Convention shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and where applicable, legal guardians to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his right to education in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

4. States Parties to the present Convention shall promote and encourage international co-operation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

PREPARATION FOR LIFE

Article 22

1. The States Parties to the present Convention agree that the education of the child shall be directed to :

a) The promotion of the development of the childs personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential and the fostering of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

b) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance and friendship among all peoples, ethnic and religious groups.

c) The development of respect for the natural environment and for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. No part of paragraph 1 of this article shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject

always to the observance of the principles set forth in paragraph 1 and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the States.

□ □

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Since 1954, he has been in continuous service with different establishments beginning with the British Iron & Steel Research Association, London as a scientific officer. The other posts held by him include : Dy Director, East African Statistical department, Nairobi, Kenya; U. N. Statistical Officer, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Director of Statistics, National Statistical Office, Zomba, Malawi.

He is with the U. N. I.C. E. F. since 1980 spending five years as Social Statistical Advisor at Khartoum, Sudan and as Zone representative at Bombay since 1985.

He is a member of different professional associations viz., Fellow of : The Royal Statistical Society and the Institute of Statisticians, (U. K.); Member : The British Trust for Ornithology and the Royal Overseas League.

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The Role of Voluntary Organisations in Building up a New Society

Sasmeeta Srivastava

" Any programme of social change can be effectively implemented only with the active involvement of all sections of people. They are the ones actually affected, and they must accept the need and feel the desire for change. Enlightened voluntary workers can best bring together government and the people ". So observed the late prime Minister Indira Gandhi while referring to the role of voluntary organisations in the country.

Bridge between the government and people

Today as never before it is realised by almost every right thinking person that no programme concerning the people can be successfully implemented without the participation of the people and when we mean people it is largely recognised that the people could be mobilised under a single banner only through a catalytic agent like a voluntary organisation. Our experience of the last 40 years after Independence and even before suggests that only voluntary organisations could provide a healthy link between the people and the government. The voluntary agency is innately endowed with such qualities as flexibility, lack of the uniqueness of red tape and closeness to the people.

For a long time, because of the uniqueness of the functioning of voluntary agencies, the voluntary sector came to be heavily banked upon in the provision of social welfare services. This was the main background to the creation of the CSWB on 13th August, 1953; for the last 33 years and more the Board has been playing a unique role in India mobilising the efforts over 10,000 voluntary organisations in the provision of basic services to disadvantaged women, children and the handicapped in almost every part of the country. It is a matter of pride that today voluntary institutions as far away as in Ladakh, in the distant dreary deserts of Rajasthan or in the inaccessible hilly areas of Meghalaya or in the islands of Andaman and Nicobar or Lakshadweep are doing excellent work in the

rehabilitation of needy women by offering them opportunities of studying once again through the Board's popular programme of Condensed Courses of Education for Adult Women or Vocational Training, or taking up opportunities of self-employment through the Board's Dairy Programme ancillary units or production units under Socio-Economic Programme.

Pioneering work in Child Welfare

The voluntary organisations are doing excellent work in the field of child welfare, aspecially in running balwadis and creches for the children of working and ailing women. For a long time such facilities as pre-schools and day care centres were considered only the privilege of the elite, but the work by voluantary organisations in the particular field with the financial support of the CSWB, has made a larger difference to this concept. Today creches and balwadis are functioning in several parts of the country more particularly in the areas inhabited by the socioeconomically disadvantaged people in the cities and the vast countryside.

Apart from the varieties of services provided by the Board and the voluntary sector, the Board has also been providing relief to women in distress through the Voluntary Action Bureaux set up in different States. A lot of volunteerism has been injected into this kind of work which seeks to help women affected by marital disharmony or caught in the crossfire of the dowry system.

For the last few years the role of voluntary sector has been expanded to include not only social welfare field but a wider gamut of social services and development work such as education, health, family planning, social forestry, wasteland reclamation etc.

Family planning is a field where the voluntary sector has been playing a significant role for the last several years. Many voluntary organisations have been conducting family planning motivation camps in the rural areas. This apart, this sector has played a significant role in the education of the people on the importance of the small family norm. It is the voluntary sector that has made family planning a people's movement.

In the field of health also the voluntary sector can play the role of a catalyst in the areas of immunisation, child health, maternal health, nutrition and the battle against such diseases as T. B. and leprosy is something that merits our attention. Mention may be made here of the work of Hind Husht Nivaran Sangh, the Leprosy Mission, the work done by Baba Amte in Warora and the late Patwardhan in Tapovan in Amravati.

In recent years the voluntary sector has also been playing a cardinal role in social forestry as well as wasteland reclamation.

In summing up there is tremondous scope for the voluntary sector to change the face of our villages and towns if only we plan these participation systematically as a bridge between the government and the people. The voluntary sector could mobilise for different

noble causes. What is required is systematic planning to involve the voluntary sector in such a way that it proves to be a soilid support to the government agencies in all developmental and welfare efforts.

□ □

Smt. Sasmeeta Srivastava, born in Bombay on September, 7-44, is the Chairman of the Central Social Welfare Advisory Board, Govt. of India, New Delhi. She secured A Master's degree in English from the Allahabad University and a degree in Education from tha same University. She also had formal training in the use of Puppets as a medium of instruction and communication.

She had a brilliant career in the field of mass communication gaining considerable experience in the area of product promotion, marketting etc. She was also an announcer of the Western music in the A. I. R. She placed all these qualifications and experiences at the disposal of the society through social service. In fact, she has had a grandiloquent record of social service, some of which are stated below.

During 1975-78, she experimented with 100 pre-school children in Ahmedabad on teaching methods. During the same period, she also actively participated in the programmes of the ISRO-SITE on creating awareness amongst the rural population on health, family and social welfare. During 82-85, she was immersed in a number of variegated progrsmmes on social reconstructions amongst the tribes and the other socio-economically backward communities. The programmes undertaken by her included ; adult literacy through non formal education, income generating activities, health and family welfare of the mother and children etc. These programmes were undertaken under the auspices of Jan Sakti Trust, Sagar, (M. P.) In the present capacity as the Chairman of the Central Social Welfare Board, she places these wide range of experiences at the disposal of the Country particularly in ameliorating the conditions of the under privileged deprived communities.

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The Role of Distance Education

Kishore Valicha

Any university system can and must be judged in terms of those objectives that define its special nature and determine its credibility. At least four such objectives can be listed. These are instruction in skills that are related to a general division of labour and that respond to changes in it, the creation of cultivated men and women through a calculated development of the powers of the mind contribution to the growth of knowledge through well-planned research, and the transmission of a common human culture based on a secular view of rationality.

Distance education through open university programmes attempts to accomplish these functions while responding to distinctly different needs. There is a growing realization that impartation of education cannot be confined to schools and colleges and has to be extended to beyond the campus. The adult must be able to return to education as and when he or she feels the need to do so. Education therefore is changing from a teacher-based activity to a student centered one. Particulary in higher education, a once-for-all education is hardly sufficient. Technological, economic and social changes as well as changes in the system of values entails a system of continuing education whereby the individual can rejuvenate himself / herself from time to time.

Much of the insular nature of formal university education his arisen from the fact that research and teaching have been regarded as twin functions that must go hand in hand. A university teacher normally earns his right to teach on accunt of the reserch he or she has been engaged in. The consequence has been the development of courses that are more geared to the needs of ressarch scholars than those of industry. Gradually, university education has lost much of its 'application' value and has grown to be an autonomous and often nonrelevant organisation. As a reaction to the above, there have

come into existence polytechnics and various institutions of management and technology. These prepare students for degrees just as universitiee do. At the same time, they cater for various levels of training so as to include work-oriented diplomas that are directly tuned to the needs of industries. These are not intended to be research oriented and are more concerned with meeting the requirements of industry.

These now include also distance or open learning systems. The open learning system was created in 1969 with the founding of the Open University in U. K. It began by providing home study courses making use of broadcasting and satisfied the needs of various classes of persons who sought the thrill of university-level work without having to put in fixed hours. It created in effect a new organisatien based on well-prepared written course material and a network of tutors nationally available.

One can perceive in this a whole host of new demands being made on the educational system. There is a tacit struggle between the traditional university framework with its emphasis on scholarship and the new demands for vocation-oriented courses that will help provide training for industry. There is demand for post-experience and in-service education to which an adult can keep returning to draw fresh sustenance.

One way of meeting these demands is to separate long-term from short-term education. A logical way of looking at this would be to assume a first stage of education which is formal and of long duration and which covers 'fundamentals.' This may be followed by experience which creates definite needs. And, as an answer to those needs, there operates the open learning system.

However, in practice, nothing so neat as this can endure. A variety of needs exist at different levels. Besides long-term education, there is need for part-time courses with a more flexible arrangement, need for specialized education that is in-service, need for intellectual stimulation for the more mature adult and the need to acquire a university degree without having to go through all the formalities of a university-level course.

The traditional universitites continue to function on the assumption that young men and women are motivated mainly by their academic interests and thus tend to ignore the strongest motivation which is the person's perception of his / her career prospects. Young men and women generally have definite ideas about what they wish to do or do not wish to do. Often they feel the need to change goals or subjects midstream depending upon their perception of changing needs. This assumes both a strong motivation and a flexibility of approach. Hence there is urgency about evolving a system that can offer a package that is flexible enough and increases acadamic freedom without proving self-destructive.

There is a further dimension to this problem and this arises from the prohibitive costs involved in setting up and running a university. This also works to the detriment of the existing university system. Teaching posts and chairs generally remain unfilled for years and research projects are held up for want of funds. The result is not only a fall in

academic standards but also staff / student ratios tend to deteriorate and the first-rate researcher feels generally attracted to western countries where facilities for advanced research are available in plenty. Gradually the effective quality of the teaching staff suffers and the result is distress symptoms such as classes not being held regularly, lack of a proper contact between teacher and student and an absence of strong intellectual stimulation. The result in many cases is only a semblance of a university without any of the vital sap that defines its function.

Apart from them comparatively low costs involved, it is a plurality of interests and needs that a distance learning system can fulfil. One can talk of a high fertility rate of distance education, something that is reflected in its capability to cater to a variety of demands. The open learning system can operate on two levels. It can provide traditional courses in a more capsular form and allow for individual variations in programming. At the same time, it can provide a variety of post-experience and in-service courses that are more geared to requirements of industry.

Traditional courses will have to be suitably modified. One may either retain the traditional arts, science and commerce streams or integrate these into a common stream with multiple choices and monitor student progress and award degrees on a credit-earning basis. Thus a student might be allowed to offer two disciplines at an elementary level at a time and over a minimum period of three years, complete twelve disciplines along with six more at a somewhat more advanced and specialized level to be able to earn his first degree. At the same time, a student who cannot earn all eighteen credits may be given a diploma if he completes twelve while a student who earns six credits only may be given a certificate. In this manner, it may be possible to evolve a more flexible system of instruction, evaluation and certification.

In addition to the above, a variety of in-service and post-experience courses will have to be devised. These will assume a basic knowledge of the discipline/area concerned and will seek to further update knowledge/skill levels and provide an opportunity for rejuvenation to adult learners. These could also include instructional packages giving the latest information on relevant disciplines such as astronomy, chemistry, sociology, anthropology, economics, etc. Such courses must include discussion at a fairly sophisticated level and must lead-once more through a credit-earning system- to a postgraduate degree.

The impartation of specialized skills does pose problems but these are mainly of a logistical nature. These problems concern the teaching of science and technology and those areas where an insistence on project work is considered desirable. Certain solutions do suggest themselves-such as practical kits in the case of basic science. There are other solutions too-such as week-end practicals or summer schools where laboratorial supplementation may be possible. One can also consider apprentice programmes with the active participation of industry. These problems are by no means intractable and call for a good deal of innovation and considerable co-ordination.

Apart from furthering a more professional understanding of social/economic roles, distance education can help significantly in the evolution of a learning society. The possibility of being able to take on a course throughout a person's working life and so to be able to update information levels is more than likely to promote a professional attitude towards one's social role. Consider the cass of a general medical practitioner who, without having to take leave from his work, can take on a course in order to understand the latest diagnostic practices and the principles behind the newer formulations in drugs. Such a course would foster in him a professional attitude, besides adding to his efficiency. And such a task would be accomplished within limited time, limited resources, limited enthusiasm and limited commitments. In other words, given several constraints, distance education strategies would certainly move one step nearer to a more self-conscious, professional and a learning society.

More specifically, distance education, and this includes its fuller development including the use of audio-visual supplementation and the channelling of an exclusive radio/TV network, will promote in the individual those basic abilities that are a necessary part of an adult in contemporary society. These will include the ability to support himself/herself, ability to make informed choices about career, politics, life-style, etc., and ability to decide what is and what is not morally acceptable.

It may be possible to plead at this point that distance education leads to a furtherance of those interests that are peculiar to an open society. By providing education to all, it brings about a de-elitization of the educational process and, by making a second chance offer to drop-outs, it almost does away with academic ostracism of those who have been rejected by the school or college system. This egalitarianism is extremely significant and is based on the view that no individual can be judged once for all by the educational process just as an individual cannot be given a once-for-all education.

By keeping university doors open throughout the individual's life, distance education can ensure the spread of rationality and a common human culture. This makes it a developing society anxious to bring about egalitarianism through the education process.

Paulo Freire has spoken of a 'semi-intransitive' mode of consciousness peculiar to a hierarchical society. Its main feature is that it lacks 'structural perception' and hence does not permit the perceiver to see beyond the immediacy of his problems. The perceiver fails to see the world around him in a critical way and tends to adopt a fatalistic view of life. Such fatalism is part of the culture of silence. An autocratic and coercive educational structure tends to reinforce such a culture of silence.

In most developing societies where universities were set up by the British there continues to exist a great wariness about giving to the student any real measure of academic freedom. There is so great a restriction on choice of subjects / disciplines and so formidable are the barriers to change that students fall upon courses of study only through the pressure the system exerts and not through any degree of voluntary choice. Thus a student

who may wish to change course mid-stream find it a virtual impossibility and is compelled to continue with a course in a listless manner.

By offering flexibility in course curricula, distance education has the capability of altering the historical experience of a society. It can cut through the heavily ritualized manner of functioning of the formal system. Education can become a more vital experience giving to the learner a chance to alter his/her existential situation and hence perception of society.

This is particularly relevant for us in India in view of the fact that our educational system only reflects the general conservatism of the Indian society. This may not permit any radical change unless the values of leading political groups overcome the constraints of the past and conceive of new options for the future. Thus a degree obtained through distance education may carry a stigma in Indian society for quite some time until the over-all social framework is amended through political pressure.

It is in this light that distance education can be seen also as an important declaration of policy. Policy in education does not rellect only a concern with resources and priorities. It is more deeply related to questions about social ends. Ends cannot be separated from the interests of dominant vested groups and their political power, and hence are not neutral. Nevertheless, a programme for education cannt be discussed except within the social ends it reflects.

Such planning can be realistic when it takes into account not only the choices available but also takes full cognizance of the constraints which cannot be easily overcome and through which the ends have to be realized. Distance education provides just such an alternative. It accepts the challenge of existing constraints on resources (building. funds, manpower) and seeks to mobilize available resources to provide the much needed instructional package. It is in that sense that distance education becomes a truly genuine alternative.

Finally, the question whether distance learning at the university level can advance research remains. It need hardly be denied that there are special difficulties as far as this is concernad. Research will have to remain the distinct preserve of the formal system.

However, research into instructional methodologies is certainly a part of distance education. Such research aims to explore the instructional strategies open to a university that practices distance learning methods. Such research will concern the designing and selection/ innovation of courses and the monitoring of these. This can be fruitful research and can provide the basic dynamism of the distance educational system.

One may end this by saying that distance education is a system in which things appear first at a distance and then come forward slowly. Things can begin to happen to the individual through distance learning and the world can take on a new topology.

Perception can be altered slowly, and a new temporal and political dimension can be perceived in which experience is cast. It can thus cause events at the individual level and these mean growth. When added up, they have far greater meaning and can produce something of a revolution. Out of an existing world a new world can gradually emerge, a more egalitarian and equitable and also a self-reliant and democratic one.

□ □

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Test of Literacy in the Adult Education Programme

S. B. Gogate

1. Introduction

The National Adult Education Programme was launched in the country on 2nd October 1978. During the initial days of the programme, as also later on, the problem of evaluating adult learners' progress in relation to the objectives of the programme, namely, literacy (including numeracy), functionality and awareness has been discussed. Directorates of adult education and State Resource Centres from various States in the country, have prepared tools to evaluate adult learners' progress. Some have been using paper-pencil tests, others self-evaluation materials, pictures etc. Maharashtra State Resource Center (Indian Institute of Education, Pune) prepared a tool in 1980-81 for the same purpose and used it in 331 adult education centres from all the then 26 districts of Maharashtra covering over 5000 adult learners. In this paper an attempt is made to present an account of the nature of that tool, the manner in which it was constructed, the rationale behind construction of such a tool and the results obtained. It is necessary to understand the nature of the adult education programme itself, its objectives (particularly pertaining to literacy), the kind of adults who attend these programmes and the level of their instructors etc., without which the manner in which the tool was constructed will not be fully appreciated. As this paper pertains mainly to testing literacy, other aspects of the adult programme are purposely not presented in detail. Moreover, it may be noted that the work done at the SRC, Maharashtra was the result of the cooperation of a band of workers and not of any one individual. It had the good fortune of receiving the blessings of the late Shri J. P. Naik and Dr. Chitra Naik, the Director of the SRC.

2. Adult Education Programme :

The programme that was launched in 1973 had a target of 10 crores of illiterate men and women to be educated within a course of 5-7 years. The programme in its new

form has been included in the Prime Minister's new 20 point programme. This also aims at educating millions of illiterate men and women till 1990. The programme has necessarily to cater to the needs of the poor, tribals, women, rural people, dalits and other down-trodden groups as they are the ones who have been the victims of social evil and have remote and remained illiterate. To cater to this clientele the adult education centres have to be in rural areas remote and out of the way places, slums, tribal areas and the like. The learner adults have been working adults though they may not be getting enough daily wages or returns. They are free for such a programme only during evenings or during night time. All the above description suggest that the instructor also will have to be from the same locality who would be able to spare a few hours for this work out of his daily routine. It has been our experience that to get a qualified instructor ('qualified' in the sense educated upto matriculation) is very difficult. Often the instructor who is a house-wife, a farm worker or a social worker from the locality has studied only upto 7th or 8th high school class. The training involved in the programme includes 12-15 days of initial training and bi-monthly inservice training. The teaching-learning process which also involves evaluation tool has to be so simple that it can be used by this semi-literate instructor.

3. Objectives of the Programme

As early as in 1978, literacy which included numeracy, functionality and social awareness were set as the objectives of the adult education programme. Achievements expected in literacy were spelt out even in the early days of the programme though the concepts of functionality and social awareness were not so clear then. As a result of our experience in the field of adult education in the SRC, Maharashtra the following could be considered as the targets to be reached in reading and writing at the end of ten months of learning.

Reading : Reading captions from news-papers,
Reading domestic / professional letters,
Reading sign-boards on shops, roads etc., and
Reading news boards in the village / locality.

Writing : Writing a simple domestic / professional letter,
Writing a simple application,
Filling in a blank form, and
Personal information sheet etc.

The evaluation tool to be prepared to evaluate the adult learners' progress in reading and writing should be able to adequately measure learners' proficiency in the above-mentioned targets.

4. Adult Education Centres

It must be noted that adult education centres are not like classes of formal schools. They do not get opened on the same date nor are the timings same. The rainy season and the harvesting season being different in different parts of the country adult education

centres in coastal areas have to remain closed in June-August while centres in places like Yeotmal and Nanded cannot function in April-May-June as the temperature in the area sometimes touches 45° c. More over, organising an adult education programme presupposes many activities like surveying the area, visiting families and interviewing adults to ascertain their needs; selection of proper instructors and training them. Thus at a particular point of time when one takes a look at different centres in the same locality, some centres appear to have just begun functioning, a few are three to six months old while some others are on the verge of finishing their ten months period of teaching.

The problem of over-achievers and under-achievers also operate in adult education centres. In some centres the learners happen to be better motivated, the instructors have a better quality, the centre is also well organized. All this results in the learners achieving better than others who may have had the same amount of learning experience. The opposite of this can also be seen. Thus a particular centre which may be six months old might have progressed worth nine months or worth three months also.

All the above suggest that the evaluation tool has to be such as can be used at any point of time of the centre and also for over-achievers and under-achievers.

5. Learning a language :

In learning reading or writing a language, a particular sequence has to be followed. In adult education scheme the old alphabet method is discarded. It is replaced by the word- sentence method. The words or the sentences used as learning-teaching materials have relevance to learners as far as their day-to-day experiences are concerned. In learning-teaching reading or writing of Marathi the following sequence has to be followed :

: Simple words
: Conjuncts
: Sentences with conjuncts
: News items / paragraphs
: Domestic / professional letters

An important characteristic of the material to be used, namely its usability in the entire state, poses a problem in the construction of a tool. As in every other state in India different regions of Maharashtra speak different versions of Marathi with the effect that some words used in Konkan coastal area are Greek and Latin to people in Marathwada and Vidarbha. Marathi spoken in and around Poona is frowned upon by many people outside the region on account of various social, cultural and caste prejudices. An attempt, therefore, has to be made to select items of testing which could be understood equally well in all the regions of Maharashtra.

6. Non-formality of the programme :

Adult education programme is basically a programme of non-formal education. Teaching-learning approaches which include evaluation have also to be non-formal.

Words like examination, pass-failure and paper-pencil test have to be kept miles away from the programme lest the adults who generally dislike examinations, because of the bad name they have earned in formal education, are likely to be scared away from the centre. Using formal methods of examination may prove to be a retrograde step in the programme. The tool to be used in the centre had therefore, to be purely non-formal and therefore usable in a non-formal play-way manner which is not necessarily casual.

7. Rationale behind the preparation of language tool :

All the above discussions lead us to suggest that the tool for evaluating the adult learners' progress in literacy in the adult education programme must have th following characteristics.

(i) The tool must be graded so as be usable at any point of time of the centre. The tool should be useful for slow as well as fast learners.

(ii) The tool should be such as could be administered in the most non-formal manner.

(iii) The language content of the tool should be such as to be useful in the entire area of a particular language.

(iv) Since the tool is not going to be a secret weapon, pre-exposure of items is likely. As such the tool should be such as to be non-coachable and usable as additional learning-teaching material.

(v) The tool should be so simple as could be conveniently used by the instructor at the centre.

(vi) With proper instructions and training, the instructor and the supervisor should be able to construct a similar tool.

8. How was the tool constructed :

The following steps were involved in the construction of the tool at the SRC, Maharashtra.

i) A thorough first-hand knowledge of the conditions under which the adult education centres were operating was obtained.

ii) Items which were common to all regions of the State were collected by holding two workshops of supervisors drawn from all the districts of the state.

iii) The supervisors who were supposed to use the tool in the field, on an experimental basis, were given orientation in conceptional frame work and rationale of the tool and also in the use of the tool.

iv) From the items so collected from districts, specific numbers of items were finalised with the help of the supervisors from the field and the co-workers in the SRC.

v) Sufficient copies of the tool were got printed with necessary copies of instructions as to how to use the tool. Sufficient number of record sheets were also got printed.

9. The evaluation tool : Its description

The following are the details of the material provided in the set for evaluating adult learners' progress (the material used for evaluating literacy is reproduced in the following paragraphs; material used for evaluating functionality and awareness is not reproduced as the present paper concerns evaluating literacy only). Material for evaluating reading.

(i) Simple words (30 words, 15 reproduced below)

कुदळ शाळा झोपडी
मजुरी ठकूबाई सावकार
कांदा पाणी दवाखाना
दारु जंगल औषध
देऊळ घर ढग

(ii) Conjuncts (30 words, 15 reproduced below)

अध्यक्ष लक्ष्मी विस्तव
यात्रा नमस्कार दुष्काळ
निर्मळ कर्ज दर्गा
धान्य क्रीडांगण श्याम
कोल्हापूर बातम्या

(iii) Sentences with simple words (30 sentences, 5 reproduced below)

भारत माझा देश आहे.
आपण संघटित झाले पाहिजे.
एक गाव एक पाणवठा.
घर साफ राहिले पाहिजे.
कुटुंब लहान सुख महान.

(iv) Sentences with conjuncts (30 sentences, 5 reproduced below)

तरुण मुलांनी व्यायाम करावा.
कातकरी वस्तीवर डॉक्टर आले होते.
लहान मुलांना ट्रिपल टोचून घ्यावे.
पोस्टात अल्पबचत खाते उघडा.
आमच्या गावी आरोग्य केंद्र आहे

(v) Paragraphs / News items (30 items, 2 reproduced below)

उसाला योग्य भाव मिळावा यासाठी शेतकऱ्यांचा
एक भव्य मेळावा सातारा जिल्ह्यातील कोरेगाव येथे
भरला होता. उसाला दर टनास कमीत कमी ३००
रू भाव मिळावा अशी मागणी करण्यात आली.

आम्ही बायका, सकाळी उठतो. झाडून घेतो. भांडी
घासतो. चहा करतो. धुणे धुतो. मुलांचे करतो.
स्वयंपाक करतो. जेवण झाल्यावर घरात बसतो.
संसाराची फार ओढ होते. पण काम मिळत नाही.

(vi) Domestic and professional letters (30 items, 2 reproduced below)

नांदगाव, 15-10-81

श्री. मनोहर चौधरी यांना
वामन गणा लोंढे, रा. नांदगाव याचा रामराम.

आपल्याला केळी पिकाविषयी पारितोषिक मिळाले असल्याची बातमी वाचली. आपण माझ्याकडे येऊन माझा केळीचा बाग पहावा व त्यात आवश्यक ती सुधारणा करणेसाठी मदत करावी.

आपला,
वामन गणा लोंढे

शामराव गणपत राखोडे
मु. पो. वारजे, ता. हवेली, जि. पुणे
दि. 7-7-81

मे. तलाठीसाहेब, मु. वारजे (ता हवेली, जि. पुणे)

विषय : सातबाराचा उतारा मिळणेबाबत.

अर्जदार : शामराव गणपत राखोडे

मी वारजे येथील रहिवासी असून या गावात माझी दोन एकर शेतजमीन आहे. तिचा सर्व्हे नंबर 158 ब असा आहे. तरी मला या जमिनीचा सातबाराचा उतारा मिळावा ही विनंती.

आपला विश्वासू,
शा. ग. राखोडे

B Material for evaluating writing

vii) All the materials provided for evaluating reading was to be used for testing writing. However, in the items related to writing domestic / professional letters, topics for letter writing were given. Some are reproduced below :

घरगुती सण, समारंभाचे बोलावणे.

पाऊस पाणी, हवामान पिके यांची बातमी देणे.

viii) Personal information sheet. This was a test both for reading and writing. The items included name, age, name of the village, number of members in the family, occupation, land holding, agricultural produce and annual income.

10. How was the tool to be used :

The itmes of the tool were printed on card-boards. At a time, not mere than 10 adults were to be given the test. The instructor was supposed to sit with ten adults around him and give the items gradually. Every sub-test contained 30 cards. The instructor was supposed to shuffle the cards and distribute any three cards to an adult who was supposed to read those cards. If the adult could do it correctly for 2 cards out of 3 he was supposed to have passed the sub-test. The instructor was to make a note of it. No two cards were the same and as such no copying could take place. Because of the novelty of the material the interest of adults was sustained for a long time.

For tests of writing the instructor was supposed to take out any three cards of a particular item and give dictation to adults who were provided slates and pencils. Immediately after, the instructor was supposed to check and correct. In the above manner the instructor went through all the items.

11. Use of the tool and results :

As already mentioned earlier the tool prepared by the Maharashtra SRC was used in 332 centres with 5079 adult learners involved. Of these 332 centres, 70 were about 3 months old, 110 3-6 months old, 37 6-9 months old and the rest had already completed the stipulated 10 months period. Results for various centres were recorded as per the duration of centres. Results for centres which were in 6-9 months group were as under. (The pattern of results for all the groups was same)

Item	Centres conducted by women instructors	Centres conducted by men instructors
Reading		
1. Simple words	113 (79.02)	385 (94.36)
2. Conjuncts	82 (57.34)	336 (82.35)
3. Sentences with simple words	88 (61.53)	335 (82.10)
4. Sentences with conjuncts	--	--
5. Items / Paragraph	70 (48.95)	297 (72.79)
6. Letters	54 (37.76)	268 (65.68)

Item	Centres conducted by women instructors	Centres conducted by men instructors
Writing		
1. Simple words	104 (72.72)	380 (93.13)
2. Conjuncts	80 (55.94)	297 (72.79)
3. Sentences with simple words	90 (62.93)	325 (79.65)
4. Sentences with conjuncts	..	..
5. News Item : Paragraph	48 (33.56)	273 (66.91)
6. Letters	38 (26.57)	209 (51.22)
Total number of adults	143 (100.00)	408 (100.00)

Numbers in parenthesis indicate percentages while the numbers outside indicate the total number of adults who were successful in various sub-tests.

12. Scope for further research

I am aware that this work could only be called a pilot work which needs further research and further tryout in the field.

[ ] [ ]

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हार्दिक शुभेच्छा !

सदाशिव निळू चौगले

अडत दुकान, श्री शाहू मार्केट यार्ड, कोल्हापूर.

Academic activities of the ISDGEI at the Kanjarbhat slum: a report.

M. V. Sreedhar

The Institute for the socially disadvantaged groups' educational improvement was set up to cater exclusively to the educational improvement and the socio economic upliftment of the children and the adults from the weaker sections of the society. It also aims to devote itself to the educational issues that are specific to the children from the weaker sections. Since the elementary education can not be divorced or isolated from the immediate environment including the family, the Institute has to direct its attention simultaneously to the transformation of the entire community/group in the localities where the ISDGEI conducts its academic programmes. The eighteen point aims and objectives of the ISDGEI appear elsewhere in this book.

After a brief survey of the slums in Kolhapur, it was decided that in the first instance, the slum named Kanjarbhat Motinagar situated beside the University campus be selected for conducting the research cum training programmes in the area of Universalization of Elementary Education (U.E.E.). The two reasons that prompted the selection of this particular slum for the Institute's academic activities are : (i) in India, a university campus is considered the highest seat of learning in a region and yet one finds a paradox of having 100 per cent illiteracy in the slums surrounding the university campus, despite the fact that the inhabitants of these slums have been settled in that area for more than 40 years and (ii) the 100 per cent illiteracy coupled with the dire poverty of the community would be an ideal setting for undertaking any serious reserach in the area of U.E.E. After a few visits to the slum for making rapport with the elders including their mukhiya (leader) it was decided to set up a kinder garten unit in that slum.

The Kanjarbhahats claim themselves to be the descendants of the soldiers of Rana Pratap Singh and for centuries, this community led a nomadic life. About forty years ago, a section of them got settled in four slums on the outskirts of Kolhapur City. The Shivaji

University was set up in 1962. Presently these slums surround the university campus. The community now comes under the category of vimukt jadi 'denotified nomadic tribe' and are eligible for the benefits guarenteed by the Constitution of India for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. But owing to their total illiteracy, they are in no positoin to claim these constitutional rights that are specific to their community. Since they are illiterate and have no training in any occupation other than illicit distilling, most of them took to illicit distilling and various other criminal activities, in which even the small children aged six onwards are engaged. Some including the children take to begging. All of them live below the poverty line as they are basically labourers in the illicit distillaries set up in their slums by outsiders. The community speaks a pidginized variety of Marathi having features of Rajasthani, Telugu and kannada. While most of the children know only the pidginized Marathi known as Kanjarbhasha, the elders know Marathi, Bazaari Hindi and some also know Kannada. All of them reached Kolhapur via Bijapur and Hubli in Karnataka.

Shortly after deciding upon the location of our activities, we visited the slum on a few occasions for making rapport with the elders including the mukhya 'leader'. A joint understanding was arrived at to set up a kinder garten in the slum with the pre-condition that they should provide accomodation for the class room and also would be responsible for the security and safety of the teachers to be appointed in the k. g. We were, however, not convinced of their assurance on the second point. Therefore, before appointing any teachers, Smt. sulochana Sreedhar and our second daughter, Shyama Sreedhar, then a student in the first year B. Sc., were asked to take the classes. The posts were advertized only after we satisfied ourselves that the slum dwellers can be depended upon in fulfilling their assurances. A major innovation in the setting up of this k. g. unit was that instead of the children going to the school, the school had gone to the children as the k. g. unit was set up in a hut in the midst of the slum. The inaugural function took place at the hands of an illiterate elderly person in that slum on June, 12-87. He performed some rituals according to their tradition and broke a coconut. Two elderly women in the same slum helped us in identifying the names of children below five years and in entering their names in the register. Thereafter, the classes were commenced the same day with some nursery rhymes. A week later, the children in the age group of 6-12 in that slum approached us individually and expressed their desire to join the k. g. unit. Owing to their persistence they were also admitted. This arrangement had its advantages and disadvatnages. For instance, in the early days, quite often there used to be total break down of communication between us and the young kids, as they were exposed only to Kanjarbhasha. Since the elder girls have some exposure to Bazaari Hindi and Marathi, in the initial stages, the older girls spontaneously took over the role of instant translators. Secondly since the older children learn faster, their services were also made use of in the class room in different manners including as class leaders. That was a partial revival of the old GURUKUL system. The older girls, however, brought along with them their younger siblings below two years to the class which caused disturbance in the class. Even then, bringing the younger siblings was not objected to, as otherwise the older girls would keep themselves out of the class altogether resulting in the deprivation of education itself to them.

Despite such a good beginning, the k. g complex did not have a smooth sailing in the early days. A prime reason for this was that we did not conduct even a preliminary

ethnographic survery of the slum nor collected even cursory information about their in-group life, on the wrong assumption that they belong to a single homogeneous group. Had we collected some information about the community before starting the classes, many of the frustrating experiences we have had could have been avoided. For instance, there used to be internecine quarrels amongst different sub groups within the community during which they showered the choicest vulgar abuses against each other. The children carried forward this habit of the elders to the class room. Since that was the first time all the children in that slum had occasion to be together in a single space, i. e., the class room, one of the children pricked or beat another one in the class room, immediately followed by the grieved child's group members counter-attacking the other child and within seconds, we found a mound of children belonging to different sub-groups. It was really a tough time for us to separate the children and bring the class back to normalcy. To our consternation, by the time we bring calm in one front, we would notice another mound of children in some other corner. During those days, the children also showered extremely vulgar abuses on each other. Even, 3-4 year old children used to gamble, sometimes with the adult females. There were also a number of occasions when the parents used to come to the class. Many a time, the parents particularly the women came to the class out of curiosity to observe the teaching- learning process. We did not object to this practice for a few months. Their visits, however, created a lot of problems to us. The women used to beat up the children in the class believing honestly that they were helping the teacher in maintaining the discipline. At times, even the men used to come inside the class room. Because of such incidences, a few teachers even deserted their jobs. There were occasions when men came to the class with lethal weapons and threatened to beat up the teachers because of the teacher's assumed failure in punishing the child who bet his child and demanding from us to close down the class, and the leave the slum for good. In such serious instances, we either used to pacify the parents through reasoned explanations or through the intervention of the mukhya ' leader ' of the slum.

All these have become a part of the history for our children who attend the classes regularly. We have not only been able to increase the number of children attending the classes, but also inculcate in them a sense of self discipline and as far as the school is concerned, a sense of belonging. We have achieved these without incentives like: mid day meals, free uniforms etc. Of much significant feature is that, we have achieved these by sparing the ROD altogether. Shortly after the opening of the k. g. unit on June, 12.87, it was discovered that the children were starved of love and affection even from their parents. And a major cause for the delinquent behaviour of the children both inside and outside the class room was this lack of love and affection. Our efforts were therefore directed in the first instance, to win over the confidence and respect of the children by showering on them our love and affection. Rather than punishing them for their wrong acts / misdeeds, explanations were given to them on the bad effects of their misdeeds and they were persuaded to give up the wrong acts and behave like good children. In this, great care was taken to ensure not to alienate them from their parents and their society- a common feature found with the middle class biased schools and convents while dealing with the children from the weaker sections. Rather than finding fault with their parents and their way of

life, the burden of their parents' misdeeds was laid on the lack of education of their parents. Great stress was laid on the differential behaviour between the educated and the uneducated persons. Since these children were attending the classes regularly, they should behave like the educated persons, for instance, their teachers-while their parents were unfortunate enough not to get an opportunity to go to any school. These were dinned into their ears day in and out, which really clicked with them. The services of the older children were used to convey our message to the young kids who did not understand Marathi properly. Our children have totally given up gambling and abusing each other. They are now exceptionally well behaved children.

The salient features of the instructional techniques employed in the schools of the ISDGEI are summarized below. Some of these features are elaborated at the end of the summary.

1. The entire emphasis is on child centered, instruction, rather than on curriculum centered one.
2. Since the syllabi of the teacher training courses are meant to cater to the needs of the middle class children, the teachers in our institute are given continuous in service training and orientation in the area of sociology of education including in improving the language skills of the children. For this purpose, the Director of the Institute sits through the entire class hours with the different teachers.
3. Multiple point of entry at the school replaces the single point of entry practised through out India. Simultaneously, it is ensured that the children do not suffer in age just because of their late entry.
4. Vocational training is imparted from class 1 onwards as part of the regular course of of study so that if any child desires to opt out of the school after class iv, it could be on its own leg including through self employment. Facilites would also be made available to the school drop outs and/or self employed ones to return to the school system either on full time or on part time basis.
5. The conventional alphebetic order is not used in teaching reading and writing rather letters based on shape similarity and pattern perception are introduced in pairs for which flash cards are used. The techniques of Programmed Instruction is employed in arithmetic class.
6. The entire teaching learning process is non formal.

1. Sociology of education :

a) Behavioural transformation.

The manner in which the children were motivated to give up certain undesirable values/habits they brought to the school on the one hand and in moulding them to develop certain desirable values/habits by giving to them a new ' reference group ', viz., the teachers, on the other hand were mentioned in detail in the preceding paragraph and it was also

mentioned then that those behavioural transformations were achieved without finding fault with their parents' behaviour or way of life which continue to be undesirable. The other desirable values/clean habits like: keeping nails short, washing the hands and feet before having food etc were imparted to them through explanations based on cause and effect formula. For instance, if the hands are not washed before having the food, the dirt on the hand would enter the stomach along with the food which would result in their falling ill. The dysentery, diarrhoea etc that are prevaling amongst them were attributed to their unclean habits including taking food exposed to flies. Even the young kids in the k. g. unit are given oral instruction in this area. Now we find a sea of change in the behaviour of the children.

b) Language Varieties

It was mentioned that at the intial stages, we had difficulty in communicating with the young Kids as they knew only Kanjarbhasha, a pidginzed Marathi, while we used only the standard Marathi both inside and outside the class room. At the same time, the children were never made to feel that the standard Marathi, when compared to their language has any superior status. Many children honestly believed that we spoke in Marathi out ot our ignorance of their language and not because we want to teach them Marathi; at the same time they also realized that since none outside the members of their community know their language, it would be in their own interest to learn standard Marathi for conversing with a wide range of people particularly because, after the setting up of the educational complex in their slum, a number of dignitaries started visiting them. The older children who had some exposure to the non- standard Marathi spoke to us in that variety, but no attempt was made to correct them, let alone find fault with that variety. The teachers, however, were instructed to use only the standard Marathi. The young kids in the k. g. unit who were exposed only to the pidginized Marathi started understanding the standard Marathi without any special effort on the part of the children or of the teachers. Throughout, the emphasis was laid only on the communicative aspect totally ignoring the variety of langauge used by the children. Now even a two year child has a passive understanding of the standard Marathi and the children in the k. g. unit and the other classess also speak standard Marathi except in the use of the honorific plural. We sincerely feel that since the oppostion between the simple and the honorific plural in Marathi is just a meaningless status based symbol, teaching of this difference at this stage would create an unnatural barrier between us and the children who otherwise love and respect us. Since the pidginized Marathi has a greater functional utility for them, we allow them to use that variety freely in the class room whenever they converse amongst themselves. Within a short span of one year, our children have acquired nearly equal facility to switch over from one code to another. Thus through a tactful handling of the language situation, our children acquired the standard Marathi without any tears.

c) Improvement of the language skills

While every child has acquired atleast a passive understanding of standard Marathi, without any special efforts, a concerted effort is made to develop the language skills of

the children, particlularly of the ones in the Child Care Unit and the k. g. unit. This is attempted in different manners. For instance, we have a number of books, pamphlets etc having coloured picture sequences. The children are exposed to the picture sequences and they are encouraged to have dialogues with the teachers in describing the items depicted in the pictures, i. e., action of person / animal, naming the colour, shape of the objects etc seen in the picture. Later, the teachers narrate the sequences into a single theme and ask the children to narrate the sequences in a similar manner. The children are also told short stories in the first instance in its entirety (duration : maximum three minutes). The same story is again repeated, but this time after each sentence or two, the teacher stops and puts questions on the principal events in the sentence, for eg., 'she went to meet her friend yesterday' The questions on this sentence would be : who went . . . ., where . . . . why . . . . when. . . . etc. In the early stages, single word answers were accepted. Gradually, the children were encouraged to answer each question in full sentences. When any one fails, the teacher gives the model answer and the child be asked to repeat it. At no stage any child is rebuked for a wrong answer,. In fact, the child is not even told that the answer was wrong; rather each child would be prodded to get the correct answer telling it that there could be a better way of answering that question and so try again etc and in the process the child comes out with the correct answer.

2. Multiple point of entry.

The single point of entry at the school has been a great stubmling block for the children from the weaker sections of the society in benefitting from the formal education. The Education Commission (1964-66) had strongly pleaded for its replacement with multiple point of entry. Late Prof. J. P. Naik through many of his writings had also pleaded strongly for such a replacement. These had no effect on the educational system. Unfortunately even Prof Naik's own Institute at Pune (Indian Institute of Education) did not make any experiments in that direction. Within its own limitations, the ISDGEI is making an experiment in repspect of multiple point of entry. Two attempts are cited.

The class 1 of its educational complex has children in the age group of 6-8 years. Since all the children were illiterate at the time of entry in the class, to begin with all were given a common instruction. Later, those children who pick up faster ahead of the class are separated from the main group and a teacher attends to such children. This attempt is done subjectwise, i. e., a child who may be in the small group in the Marathi class may remain with the main group in arithmetic class. The children below the class average are given special attention in enabling them to come upto the class average. This again is arranged subjectwise. It has been ensured that this type of mobility does not create any psychological impact on the children. What is being attempted is to prepare the older children to appear at the iv standard public examination in 2 or 3 years time against the normal four year's time. This model can be attempted with suitable modification upto class vii. This could also be adopted for the school drop outs if and when they decide to return to the school system. With a slight adjustment, this procedure is attempted in the Child Labour Unit. They have no fixed working hours. Whenever these children come to the class, one of the teachers attend to their studies. The learning process in this Unit is highly

individualized. This has been putting a great strain on the teachers; yet they have been discharging their responsibilites with a sense of dedication. In the case of the child labour the effort is to prepare them (illiterate at the time of entry) to appear at the vii standard public examination in four year's time from the date of entry. They would be simultaneously offered vocational training in one trade or the other so that on passing the vii standard examination, if they so wish they could go for self employment. The Institute has accepted the complete responsibility for obtaining the financial and other resources for our children, if they opt for self employment. Probably, nowhere else in India, such an experiment in the vital area of Universalization of Elementary Education is being attempted.

3. Vocationalization of education.

The Institute is aware of the statement of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Delhi (Challenge of Education) that quite often the universities produce uneducable unemployable students owing to the option of availing certain combinations of subjects in the Arts Faculty. The students, in fact, continue their studies aimlessly, sometimes upto the Ph. D. level assuming that if they continue their studies, somewhere at some level they might get a job, whereas all the resources of the government put together can not provide jobs to every one passing different examinations at the university level. In such a situation, the only course available to the educational system is to opt for vocational courses right from the beginning with a view to offering the children a scope for self employment whenever they opt out of the school system. This approach would also drastically reduce the mad rush for entry at the college level. the vocational training is also essential to provide man power for econmic growth particularly for the maintenance of the infra structure and for the production techniques. Keeping these in view, the Institute has commenced offering vocational courses for our children from class 1. To begin with, the girls in the class 1 are being taught hemming stitches, hand sewing etc., while the girls in the Child Labour Unit are being taught machine tailoring. Machine embroidary would be introduced later on. (one of the teachers with the Institute is an I. T. I. trained diploma holder in tailoring). It is proposed to introduce training in making puppets, toys etc. for the boys in class, 1 in the first instance with card boards, for which the models have been obtained.

A major disincentive for the school system in introducing different types of vocational courses is the prohibitive cost,, particularly with respect to the salary of the vocational teachers. For surmounting this handicap, the Institute proposes to take advantage of different short term vocational courses offered specially for the girls/women by the Union and State governments by deputing its teachers to such courses so that the Institute could offer vocational course in different trades, without any additional cost. Pooling the services of a few vocational teachers by a group of schools in a town/rural area is another way of surmounting the prohibitive cost of full time vocational teachers. The Zilla Parishads, Municipal Corporations etc could appoint vocational teachers in 3-4 trades and each one of them could be sent to different schools by turn on different days of the week so that each school in an area could impart training in 3-4 trades without any additional burden. The only caution that needs to be taken while deciding upon the trades is that the school

system must necessarily have to integrate itself with its immediate environment and the community in which it is located.

The innovative academic programmes being adopted in a phased manner in the develpoment of an Instructional Technology for the children of the weaker sections of the society including that of the urban slums were stated briefly. Our experience, however, show that it is not just a one way affair of the children learning from us. We are also learning from the children. Permit me to mention just two instances :

a) With the complete separation of the class 1 and the N. F. E. of the Child Labour Unit from the K. G. and the Child Care Units, the grown up children are not allowed to bring with them their younger siblings to the class. The children below 5 years are taken care of by two teachers. Presently a single hall is used for both the K.G.Unit and the Child Care Unit. The latter unit is yet to be set up formally. When the children below 3 years walk/crawl into the class room on their own, we give them also slate and pencil or some other articles to keep them engaged. The tiny tots have seen their elders taking the slates to the teachers for correction. Therefore, these tiny tots below three years also take their slates to the teachers who have been advised not to discourage the kids. Therefore, every time an infant takes a slate to the teacher, she would draw something on it and ask him/her to imitate it. Another related issue is that the slates are given for use in the class room only and not allowed to be taken to their huts. The tiny tots have observed that their elders either keep the slates on the table or give them to the teachers, hence these infants also invariably leave the slates behind, when they leave the class room. Even though we have not been in a position to keep track of their coming and going to the class, so far we have not lost a single slate.

b) One day, when I was sitting at the back of the K. G. Unit and observing the class, a one year old kid came to me. I gave him a four paged card board picture book. Immediately thereafter, the other kids also came to me for books and I give each one of them a book. Shortly thereafter, I went to another unit forgetting that I had given books to the tiny tots. Half an hour later, when I returned to the k.g.unit, I found that they were still engrossed with the pictures in the books; some even had exchanged their books. The learning that is taking place in this manner without any efforts on the part of the teachers or parents could be designated as environmental learning. This incidentally is the greatest advantage of the middle class children over their disadvantaged counterparts. The cognitive stimulation during the early childhood is very vital for the intellectual development at a later life. This essential stimulating environment unfortunately is denied to the disadvanatge groups. There are sufficient research evidence to show that early deprivation causes great damage to a growing child as the development of brain does not take place evenly throughout life. The studies show a 20 point I. Q. difference between identical twins brought up in deprived and abundant environments. These differences were split up as under :

i) 10 I. Q. point difference between the period of birth and 4 years;
ii) 6 I. Q. point difference between the ages of 4 and 8 years and
iii) only 4 I. Q. point difference between the ages of 8 and 17 years.

The studies on deprivation further reveal that there are crucial learning areas in the early days of infancy which if not taken place at the appropriate time would not be compensated later on by the central nervous system. Herein lies the greatest advantage of the urban elite children over their socially disadvantaged counterparts. It is primarily for overcoming this handicap of the deprived children that the ISDGEI has decided to set up the Child Care Unit for children below 3 years. This Unit would have multifarious functions. For instance, these children are usually left uncared for in the slum when the mothers go to work. Occasionally, their elder sisters take care of them. The condition of these children become unbearable when their mothers are picked up by the police and placed in the lock up for 2-3 days. Children including the tiny tots then find our class room a safe refuge. Through this unit, we would be taking over the role of the baby sitters and simultaneously relieve the elder sisters of even the casual responsibility of these children which would enable them to attend the non formal education unit unhampered. In addition, the presence of these tiny tots in the Unit for about 8 hours a day would enable us to conduct research in certain vital areas like: language acquisition in bilingual context (Kanjarbhasha is the mother tongue of the children while in the Unit only standard Marathi is used), cognitive development etc. The continued social and environmental deprivation have made the children from the weaker sections of the society unequal in abilities to compete with their middle class counterparts which in its turn has deprived the former, barring a few exceptions here and there, of the benefits of formal education. What is to be noted is that inequality in any sphere of life is a negation of the views of equality to which we formally subscribe through the Indian Constitution, while inequality in education has the additonal consequence also of depriving opportunities in the future life, in any sphere.

Other activities.

Within a few days of the commencement of the K. G. complex last year, it was discovered that even children in the age group of 12-15 years born & grew up in the slum had not seen any part of the Kolhapur City except a few fixed points like: places where they deliver the illicit liquor and the cinema houses where their mothers sell the tickets in the 'black'. In this trade, the women in this slum have a monoploy of three theatres in a single area. The Institute therefore took the children numbering 37 on an educational tour of Kolhapur City including the railway station, as they had seen a railway engine only in cinemas. At every point, the teachers explained the significance of the places, objects, animals etc. At the fag end of the year they were also taken to a nearby hill station having historical importance. They were shown all the important places in that hill station including the escape route of Shivaji Maharaj. Here again full explanations of all the points were given by the teachers. They spent about 5 hours in the hill station of which for two hours the children were left completely free in the children's park within the hill station. That was their first experience on 'swing', 'see-saw', 'sliding stone' etc. The children also gave public performance on April, 14, 87, the Ambedkar Jayanti day in which the Collector was the chief guest. Many other dignitaries also witnessed the performance. On seeing their performance, many expressed a sense of disbelief. Earlier on January, 26-87, the flag hoisting ceremony, the first in that slum, took place. The Chairman of the City Lions Club was the chief guest. The ladies of the Lioness Club also attended in large number.

That was the first time so many ladies and gents from the elite society visted that slum in about a dozen Maruti cars. Their presence gave the children self confidence and the vistors were also nonplused to hear the children reciting the National Anthem and the other National songs like: sa:re jaha:n se achha Hindusta:n... etc More than anything, else this performance had a great impact on the parents of the children. Till then, they used to repeatedly tell us that their children were not fit for education and that we were simply wasting our time, energy and money on them. Now for the first time the parents started dreaming that some day their children could also lead a respectable life of honest citizens of tomorrow. They are now determined to ensure that their children do not enter their professions. This is also having a chain reaction on their life style They find an incompatibility between the illicit distilleries and a school complex in the slum and want to close down the illicit distilleries. But the muscle power of the owners of the distilleries prevent then from closing down. Through our good offices, some of the nationalized banks have come forward to help them by giving unsecured loans. Attitude towards the size of the family is another area where our presence in the slum have changed. Almost every household has 8-10 children. Last year, they were unwilling even to listen to us on the need to have small family norm; their attitude have now changed, We have approached the Inner Wheel Club to arrange a family planning camp in the private nursing homes of some of their members.

We have saved the life of the Muhkya of the slum. He was a drug addict and his liver had completely damaged and his intestine had ruptures. On our request, the Civil Surgeon of the Civil Hospital personally operated and kept him under his personal observation thereafter till fully recouped. We also arranged the entire blood required for his recovery. The Institute has a list of potential blood donors along with the blood groupings. We arrange the blood donations of these volunteers whenever some one is in urgent need. We had also organized two medical camps in the slum: one for the children with two paediatricians and the other for the adult women with two lady gynaecologists and a lady cancer specialist. Medicines were distributed thereafter as per the prescriptions, A tree plantation ceremony was arranged in which the Mayor of Kolhapur, Shri P.T. Patil was the chief guest. The photos of this function appear in this book.

A free coaching class in tailoring including machine embroidery is being organized for the benefit of the grown up girls and women. This would be open to the women of the neighbouring slums also As a pre - requisite for undergoing this coaching class, the illiterate trainees would be offered simultaneously coaching in functional literacy. The machine for this was donated by the President of the the City Lioness Club, Smt. Aruna Gandhi. A photo of this function appears in this book. During the current academic year, the Institute proposes to extend its activities to a neighbouring slum inhabited by about 5000 immigrants from Andhra Pradesh. Stone breaking in quarries and at the house construction sites are the main occupation of this community. They speak a variety of Telugu which is highly influenced by Marathi both in its vocabuary and structure. One of the reserarch projects proposed to be undertaken in this slum is a study on the linguistic convergence and language maintenance of the mother tongue amongst this community.

In closing It might be restated that the education of the children can not be isolated from its immediate environment and that no child is uneducable. If the children from certain sections of the society fail to benefit from the formal educational system, the fault lies with the system and not with the children. Or is it that the system wants to keep out side its perview the children from certain sections? Social segregation based on social stratification has been a part of the Indian social structure from the time immemorial. Through subtle adjustments, the inegalitarian social structure survived all these centuries, under different rulers. Since the Indian Constitution guarentees equality in every respect to everyone, the only way the elite could perpetuate the inegalitarianism is through manouvring the educational system in such a manner, that the children from certain segments of the society always remain the 'left outs'. This attitude of the elite and their hegemony over the educational system in India has to be viewed in the context the pious wishes expressed in the report of group 2 (para 1. 1. 2) of the International Seminar on implementation strategies of National Policy on Education (New Delhi June 26/29-86)which inter alia states ' to some extent, the credibility of the N. P. E. hinges on our ability to achieve the objectives of universalization of elementary education. To the extent the groups who are left out of the ambit of elementary education are the weaker groups of the society, the implementation of the Policy requires special measure fo endure the achievement of its goals and objectives '. With an elite group determined to deny equality of access to education to the children from the weaker sections, would their pious wishes ever be materialized ? if not, what about achieving the projected targets of the U. E. E. ? Probably, the elites despite their lip sympathy to the poor would prefer the projected 500 million adult illiterates in India to usher the country to the 21st Century.

Whatever else might happen to the educational system in India, in the slums in which this Institute is working, we are determined to ensure that not only every child gets proper education, but in the next 6-7 years, we would also ensure that our children perform in the public examinations better than the children from the best school in Kolhapur. This is an academic Challenge we have accepted. The Institute does not charge any fees for the various services rendered to the slum dwellers including the children and the other weaker sections of the society.

हार्दिक शुभेच्छा !

फोन : २८३८९

दत्तात्रय तुकाराम कारेकर (सराफ)

६१ बी, जगन्नाथ शंकरशेट रोड, घाटी दरवाजा, कोल्हापूर.

सोने, चांदीच्या तयार दागिन्यांचे व्यापारी

कोल्हापूरी साजाचे उत्पादक व विक्रेते

भाषिक भेद व मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या शैक्षणिक समस्या

सुलोचना एम्. श्रीधर

"संस्कृती' म्हणजे परिस्थितीतून उद्‌भवणाऱ्या समस्यांचे निराकरण करण्याचे परंपरागत चालत आलेले पद्धतशीर मार्ग होत. समान अनुभूतींनी व समान अपेक्षांनी बांधील असलेल्या जनसमूहाचे वर्तन प्रकार म्हणजेच 'संस्कृती', असेहि संस्कृतीबद्दल म्हणता येईल. मानव हा जन्मापासून एखाद्या विशिष्ट जनसमूहाचा सदस्य असतो. त्याला माणूस म्हणून विकसित होताना त्या जनसमूहाची संस्कृती अंगीकारावी लागते. प्रत्येकाची संस्कृती ही तो ज्या जनसमूहात जन्माला येतो व वाढविला जातो त्या जनसमूहाप्रमाणे भिन्न भिन्न असते. माणसाच्या केवळ बाह्य चालीरीती किंवा वेशभूषेवरून त्याची संस्कृती ठरत नसते. त्याची अभिवृत्ती, त्याच्या समजूती, त्याचां श्रद्धास्थाने, त्याची नीतीमूल्ये या सर्वांचा समावेश 'संस्कृती' या एकाच शब्दात होत असतो.

व्यक्ती ज्या लोकसमूहात वाढते, लहानाची मोठी होते त्या लोक समूहाच्या चालीरीती त्या व्यक्तीला अगदी बेमालूम शिकाव्याच लागतात. त्यात कसूर करून चालत नाही. त्या त्या लोकसमूहाच्या चालीरीती अंगीकारणाऱ्या व्यक्तीलाच त्या समाजात सुसंस्कृत समजले जाते व प्रतिष्ठित नागरीक म्हणून मान्यता मिळते. अशा तऱ्हेचा सुसंस्कृत व प्रतिष्ठित नागरीक होण्यासाठी त्या लोकसमूहाचे जनसंवादाचे माध्यम त्या व्यक्तीला अंगीकारावे लागते. 'भाषा' हे जनसंवादाचे सर्वात प्रभावी माध्यम आहे. भाषा ही समूहसंस्कृतीहि आहे आणि समूहसंस्कृतीच्या आविष्काराचे साधन देखील. त्यामुळे प्रत्येक मूल ५+ या वयाला शाळेत येताना आपापल्या जनसमूहाची भाषा शिकून आलेले असते. वातावरणाच्या भाषेत मूल परिपक्व झालेले असते.

शिक्षण व भाषेचा अभ्यास यांचे परस्पर संबंध अविभक्त आहेत. शिक्षणाचे प्रमुख व प्रभावी माध्यम आहे भाषा. आणि भाषेचा अभ्यास शिक्षणात अनन्यसाधारण महत्व पटकावून बसलेला आहे. अगदी १ ली पासून ते उच्च माध्यामिक स्तरापर्यंत भाषा विषय सर्व स्तरांवर सक्तीचा असतो, प्राथमिक व माध्यमिक शाळेतील शिक्षण मातृभाषेतून दिले जाते तर उच्च शिक्षण इंग्रजीतून देण्याची प्रथा आहे. राष्ट्रभाषा म्हणून हिन्दीचा अभ्यासही केला जातो.

बोलणे, वाचणे, लिहिणे, निबंधलेखन व व्याकरण या भाषेच्या अध्ययनातील महत्वाच्या पाच बाजू आहेत. शाळेत दाखल होणारे प्रत्येक मूल आपल्या मातृभाषेत काही प्रमाणात बोलण्याची क्षमता प्राप्त करुनच आलेले असते. त्या मुलाची भाषा त्याच्या घरातील अथवा वातावरणातील जनसंवादाच्या नियमांनुसार बनलेली असल्याने ज्या वातावरणातून मूल येते त्यानुसार शाळेत एकाच वेळी दाखल होणाऱ्या मुलांची भाषा भिन्न भिन्न असते, मुलाच्या बोलण्याच्या संवयीतील फरक लक्षात घेऊन मुलाला प्रमाणित साहित्यिक भाषेच्या जवळ आणणे हे शाळेचे आद्य कर्तव्य आहे. घरातील भाषेच्या जोडीलाच त्याला प्रमाणित भाषा शिकवावी घरातील भाषेऐवजी प्रमाणित भाषा असे त्याचे स्वरूप नसावे. हे जरी खरे असले तरी प्रत्यक्षात मात्र शिक्षक बालकाला प्रमाणित भाषा शिकविताना बालकाच्या बोली भाषेची अवहेलना करताना आढळून येतात. सर्वसाधारणपणे भाषेतील फरकालाच शिक्षक बुद्धिमता समजताना आढळून येते. प्रमाणित भाषेत उत्तर देणारे मूल हुशार समजले जाते तर तेच उत्तर आपल्या बोली भाषेत स्पष्ट करणारे मूल मात्र मंदबुद्धि मानले जाते. शिक्षकाने जर बालकाच्या मंदबुद्धीबद्दल किंवा त्याच्यातील उणीवांबद्दल अथवा बोलण्याच्या शैलीबद्दल औपरोधिक शेरे मारले तर मुलाच्या मनात त्या शिक्षकाविषयी अढी निर्माण होते. शिक्षक व बालक यांच्यामधील दरी रुंदावत जाते व याचा दारुण परिणाम स्थगन व गळतीवर दिसून येतो.

हा भयानक परिणाम टाळण्यासाठी भाषेचे नियोजन करणे अत्यावश्यक आहे. कोणत्याही समस्येचे नियोजनपूर्व निराकरण करावयाचे झाल्यास त्या समस्येचा बारकाईने अभ्यास करावा लागतो. त्यावर व काटकसरीचे व सुलभ असे उपाय शोधावे लागतात. भाषा देखील या नियमास अपवाद नाही.

वर्षानुवर्षे एका विशिष्ट भारतीय समाज घटकामध्ये स्थगन व गळतीचे प्रमाण वाढतच आहे. यामधील बहुसंख्य मुले ही दुर्बल घटकातील व अत्यंत मागासवर्गीय जाती जमातीतील असतात. यांचे राहणीमान हे दारिद्र्यरेषेच्या खूपच खाली असते. यांनाच सामान्यतः सामाजिक व सांस्कृतिक दृष्ट्या मागासलेले संबोधण्यात येते. हा फार मोठा उपेक्षित समाजघटक आहे.

प्राथमिक शाळेतील स्थगन व गळतीची कारणे शोधून काढण्यासाठी वेळोवेळी निरनिराळ्या शिक्षणतज्ज्ञांच्या नानाविध समित्या स्थापन करण्यात आल्या. त्यांनी या समस्येवर विविध बाजूंनी विचारहि केला. तथापि दुर्दैवाने मुलाच्या भाषिक विकासाकडे शिक्षणतज्ज्ञांचे लक्ष वेधले गेलेले नाही. मुलाच्या भाषिक देवाण घेवाणीची विशेषतः सामाजिकरणाची जडण घडण दुर्लक्षितच राहिली.

प्रस्तुत लेखिकेस वाटते की मुलांच्या शाळापूर्व जीवनातील घराच्या वातवरणातील भाषेस शिक्षणासमस्ये फार महत्त्वाचे स्थान आहे. मुलास शिक्षणासाठी उद्युक्त करण्यास अथवा नाऊमेद करण्यास त्याच्या घरातील वातावरणाची भाषा फार मोठ्या प्रमाणात कारणीभूत होते या निबंधात यापैकी काही समस्याचा व त्यांच्या निराकरणाचा विचार होईल.

या प्रसंगी सांस्कृतिक दृष्ट्या मागासवर्गीय मुले कोणती, याविषयी प्रथम विचार करणे उचित

होईल. सांस्कृतिक दृष्टया मागासवर्गीय मुले मतिमंद नसतात किंवा शारीरिक दृष्टया अपंगहि नसतात. इतर मध्यमवर्गीय मुलांइतकीच ही मुले निरोगी असतात. यांचे वाचा–श्रवण अवयवही इतर मध्यमवर्गीय मुलां एवढेच कार्यक्षम असतात. या मुलाना मान्यताप्राप्त जनसमूहाच्या दृष्टीने सुसंस्कृत किंवा सुशिक्षित होण्या-पासून मज्जाव करण्यात आलेला असतो. भारतात अस्तित्वात असलेल्या विविध अन्याय्य व विषमतावर्धक रीतीरिवाजाद्वारा या मुलांना औपचारिक शिक्षण घेण्यास आवश्यक अशा सामाजिक शालापूर्व अनुभूतींपासून वंचित केले जाते.

भारतीय समाजरचनेत सांस्कृतिक दृष्टया मागासलेली मुले दोन वर्गात विभागता येतील.

१) घराण्यातील पहिले विद्यार्थी :

यांचे पालक/माता पिता औद्योगिक दृष्टया विकसित शहरात नोकरीस असतात. माता व पिता दोघेहि बहुधा कोणत्या ना कोणत्या कारखान्यात अथवा चरितार्थासाठी अन्य व्यवसायात गुंतलेले असतात. लघु उद्योगास शासनाने दिलेल्या प्रोत्साहनामुळे हल्ली मागासवर्गीय जाती जमातीतील काही लोकांची आर्थिक स्थिती काही प्रमाणात सुधारली आहे. उदा. चर्मोद्योग, दुग्धविकास, कुक्कुटपालन इत्यादी सहकाराधिष्ठित व्यवसायामळे ग्रामीण भागातही आर्थिक विकास साधला आहे. ही सधन मुले जातीय श्रेणीमध्ये हिंदु धर्मातील अथवा अन्य कोणत्याही धर्मातील कोणत्याही जातीची असली तरी तुलनेने दुसऱ्या वर्गातील मुलांच्या मानाने अत्यल्प आहेत.

२) दुसरा वर्ग आहे तो एकदम मागास जातीतील व दारिद्र्यरेषेखालील जीवन जगणाऱ्या मुलांचा. यांना मागास जाती या वर्गात घातले जाते. ही मुले ग्रामीण तसेच शहरी भागातपण असतात. मागासवर्गीय मुलांचे हे दोन्ही वर्ग सामाजिक व आर्थिकदृष्टया परस्पर विरोधी आहेत. पहिल्या वर्गातील मुलांचे आईवडील हे औद्योगिक वसाहतीत नोकरीस असल्याने त्यांची आर्थिक स्थिती चांगली असते. शिवाय त्यांच्यावर हा अमुक जातीचा किंवा धर्माचा असा सामाजिक कलंक पण लावण्यात येत नाही. या उलट दुसऱ्या वर्गातील मुले दारिद्र्यरेषेखालील दु:सह जीवन जगत असतात. अनेक सामाजिक रूढी परंपरा त्यांना मागे खेचत असतात.

हे दोन्ही वर्ग अशा प्रकारे परस्पर-विरोधी असले तरी त्यांच्यात पुढील बाबींमध्ये साम्य आढळून येते.

- घराण्यातील शिकणाऱ्या मुलांची ही पहिलीच पिढी असते.
- शिकण्यासाठी प्रेरणा नसते.
- शिकण्यासाठी कोणत्याहि प्रकारची पूर्वतयारी नसते.
- बालमजुरी.
- मुलींचे बालविवाह.
- आई-वडील व मुले यांच्यात संभाषणाचा अभाव.

- अनिरीक्षित खेळ व खेळगडी.
- शिक्षणासाठी घडे घालून देणाऱ्या कौटुंबक वातावरणाचा अभाव.
- मानसिक व शारीरिक क्रियांचा समन्वय साधणाऱ्या, रंगी-बेरंगी व विविध आकार-प्रकारांच्या खेळण्यांचा अभाव.
- बालमनात काहूर माजविणाऱ्या प्रश्नांची उत्तरे देऊन विशेषणे व क्रिया विशेषणांसह नवनवीन शब्दांची भर टाकून शब्दसंग्रह समृद्ध करणाऱ्या व भाषिक विकास साधणाऱ्या संभाषण युक्त कौटुंबिक वातावरणाचा अभाव.

प्रस्तुत लेखिकेने महाराष्ट्रातील सातारा, सांगली व कोल्हापूर या तीन जिल्ह्यातील विविध सामाजिक स्तरांवरील ४ ते ६ वयोगटातील शालापूर्व ४३३ बालकांच्या भाषेचा अभ्यास केला. त्यात २२२ मुलगे व २११ मुलींचा समावेश आहे. ही सर्व मुले शालापूर्व वयाची निवडण्यामागील मुख्य उद्देश असा की, त्यानी दिलेल्या प्रतिसादाची भाषा ही त्यांच्या कौटुंबिक वातावरणाचीच भाषा आहे. त्या भाषेवर कोणत्याही प्रकारचा शालेय संस्कार झालेला नाही.

भाषेचे नमुने घेताना प्रामुख्याने तीन तंत्रांचा वापर करण्यात आला.

- बालकांच्या अनुभव कक्षेतील निरनिराळी रंगी बेरंगी चित्रे दाखवून प्रतिसाद काढून घण्यात आला.
- संभाषण व कथित गोष्टी परत सांगावयास सांगितल्या.
- त्यांच्या जीवनातील नवनवीन अनुभव कथन करावयास सांगितले.

मिळालेल्या भाषा नमुन्यांचे पृथःकरण करता सांस्कृतिकदृष्ट्या मागासवर्गीय मुले व मध्यमवर्गीय मुले यांच्याकडून मिळालेल्या भाषिक प्रतिसादात कमालीची तफावत आढळून आली. भाषिक विकासा-बरोबरच त्यांच्या मानसिक, शारीरिक व सामाजिक व्यक्तित्व विकासावरहि या तफावतीचे झालेले गंभीर परिणाम प्रकर्षाने जाणवतात.

मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या बोली भाषेतील वाक्ये छोटी छोटी असून प्रमाणित भाषेच्या तुलनेने ती व्याकरण दृष्ट्या अयोग्य असतात. त्यांचा भर कर्तरि प्रयोगावर असून वाक्य-विचार दृष्ट्या अपूर्ण वाक्ये हे त्यांच्या बोली भाषेचे खास वैशिष्ट्य आहे.

४ ते ६ वयोगटातील सांस्कृतिक दृष्ट्या मागासवर्गीय बालकांना त्यांच्या दैनंदिन जीवनातील काही चित्रे दाखविण्यात आली. त्यावेळी अनेकवार सूचना केल्यानंतर मिळालेले एकशब्दीय प्रतिसाद पुढील प्रमाणे–

बैल
गइ

गइवासरू
बापइ
काटी हाय

दाखविलेल्या चित्रात जरी वेगवेगळ्या कृती दिसत असल्या तरी बालकांकडून तेच ते एकशब्दीय प्रतिसाद मिळाले.

गइ
गइवासरु
बैल
बापइ

त्याच चित्रांना त्याच वयोगटातील मध्यमवर्गीय बालकांनी अर्थपूर्ण वाक्यांतून विशेषणे व क्रिया विशेषणांचा उपयोग करुन चित्राकृतीप्रमाणे वेगवेगळे प्रतिसाद दिले.

चित्रकथेला ४–६ वयोगटातील बालकांकडून मिळालेले प्रतिसादहि अत्यंत बोलके आहेत.

पेरूच्या झाडावर बसून पेरू खाणारा पोपट व झाडाखाली हातात काठी घेऊन उभा असलेला शेतकरी असे चित्र ४–६ वयोगटातील विविध सामाजिक स्तरांवरील बालकांना दाखविण्यात आले. त्यावेळी मागासवर्गीय मुलांनी सांगितलेली कथा या प्रमाणे.

"एक असतो पोपट. आनि तितं जाऊन खातोय पेरु. आनि त्यो त्याला म्हनायलाय की, आनि म्हनतोय की, 'खाऊ नगस म्हनतोय न्हवं.' आनि म्हनतोय की, की, की, तुला ठारच करीत म्हनतोय."

याच चित्रकथेस त्याच वयोगटातील मध्यमवर्गीय मुलांनी दिलेला प्रतिसाद पुढीलप्रमाणे.

"एक होता पोपट. हिरवा हिरवा गार. त्या पोपटाला पिकलेले पेरू फार आवडत. तो पोपट उडुन गेला पेरूच्या झाडावर. झाडावर बसून पेरू खायला लागला. तेवढ्यात झाडाचा मालक तिकडून आला. तो त्या पोपटाला म्हणाला. "पेरु खाऊ नकोस. अजून पिकले नाहोत ते. कच्चे पेरू खाल्लेस तर तुझ्या पोटात दुखेल."

संकलित भाषा नमुन्यातील वरील दोन प्रातिनिधिक उदाहरणांचे निरीक्षण करता मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या भाषेची ठळक वैशिष्ट्ये पुढीलप्रमाणे–

मागासवर्गीय मुले आद्य महाप्राणोच्चार करू शकतात. उदा. घर, खातोय, पण मध्य व अन्तस्थ महाप्राणोच्चारांचा त्यांच्या भाषेत अभाव आहे. मध्य व अन्तस्थ महाप्राणोच्चारांचे श्रवण सामर्थ्य पण त्यांचे ठायी नाही. त्यामुळे दोन भिन्न अर्थीय शब्दांसाठी ते एकाच शब्दाचा उपयोग करतात.

उदा. माता–माथा/पाता.
वाक–वाख/वाक
गाडा–गाढा/गाडा
साफ–साफ/साप

- मागासवर्गीय मुले उभयान्वयी अव्ययांचा वारंवार व अनाठायी वापर करतात. त्यांना सलग, अस्खलितपणे चार वाक्ये बोलता येत नाहीत.

- मागासवर्गीय मुले भाषिक आविष्काराच्या व संकल्पना घडणीच्या बाबतीत अपुरी पडतात.

- मागासवर्गीय कुटुंबे ही दर्जाधिष्ठित असतात. आपल्या बालकांना कार्य-कारण भाव समजावून सांगणे आई-वडिलांना गरजेचे वाटत नाही. ते मुलांना फक्त आदेश सोडतात 'कर', 'करु नकोस', 'मार खाशील', 'थोबाड फोडीन'. दुसऱ्या शब्दात सांगावयाचं म्हणजे बालक-पालक सुसंवाद साधला जात नाही. स्वाभाविक मुलांना संकल्पना-घडणीत व भाषाविष्कारात अडचणी येतात. पालकांची दर्जाधिष्ठित अभिवृत्ती मुलांना शिक्षणाविषयी प्रेरणा देण्यास कुचकामी ठरते. उलट शिक्षणापासून मुले दूर पळण्यास पालकांची दर्जाधिष्ठित अभिवृत्तीहि बऱ्याच अंशी कारणीभूत ठरते.

मागासवर्गीय माता मुलांना शाळेत पाठविताना बजावतात, "नीट वाग. गप गुमान बस. दिंगाना घालू नगस. वटवट करू नगस. बाई मारत्याल धरुन." परिणामी मुले शाळेत जायलाच धजावत नाहीत.

या उलट मध्यमवर्गीय माता मुलांना शाळेत पाठविताना सांगतात, "घाबरू नकोस. बाई काही करत नाहीत. तुला जर कुणी त्रास दिला तर बाईना सांग. घरात जशी आई असते तशाच शाळेत बाई असतात." या दोन भिन्न वर्गातील मातांच्या अभिवृत्तीतील हा फरक बालकाच्या शैक्षणिक प्रगतीत मोलाचा वाटा उचलतो हे सत्य नाकारता येणार नाही.

पालकांच्या अभिवृत्तीप्रमाणेच शिक्षकांची अभिवृत्तीदेखील बालकास शाळेत सामावून घेण्यास अथवा शाळेबाहेर ढकलून देण्यास कारणीभूत ठरते.

शिक्षकांची अभिवृत्ती

आपल्या प्राथमिक शिक्षकास दिले जाणारे प्रशिक्षण अपुरे व चुकीच्या विचारप्रणालींवर आधारलेले आहे. बालकाच्या भाषेचे मूल्यमापन करताना आपला शिक्षक भाषान्तर्गत भेद लक्षात घेत नाही. आपले शिक्षक पाठ्य पुस्तकाच्या आधारे 'चूक' किंवा 'बरोबर' असे शेरे मारून मोकळे होतात. भाषा हे साध्य नसून अध्ययनाचे प्रमुख साधन आहे हे आपल्या शिक्षकाच्या लक्षातच येत नाही. प्रमाणित भाषा बोलणाऱ्या मुलाला हुशार समजण्यात येते. त्यात त्या बालकाचे काय कर्तृत्व. सगळा वाटा असतो त्याच्या कौटुंबिक वातावरणाचा. वेगळ्या बोली भाषेच्या बालकांची भाषिक भेदावरून अवहेलना केली जाते. सुरुवातीस बालवाडीत प्रवेश घेणारी बालके बालसेविकेने सांगितलेल्या कथा आपल्या भाषत घडघडा सांगायचा प्रयत्न करतात. त्यांच्या भाषेला बालसेविका हसते. ती हसली म्हणून इतर मुले हसतात. 'नकारात्मक मान्यतेमुळे मुले खजिल होतात. आपली आई आपल्याशी ज्या भाषेत बोलत आली, आपले मित्र आपल्याशी जी भाषा बोलतात त्या भाषेला हिणविल्यामुळे मुले नाराज होतात. ' हे रोज रोज ऐकण्यापेक्षा शाळाच सोडलेली बरे,' असे त्यांना वाटू लागते. शिक्षिका प्रमाणित भाषा न बोलणाऱ्या मुलांना मतिमंद समजतात.

केवळ समजूनच थांबत नाहीत तर आपली ही भावना 'ढ गोळा,' 'शेणाचा पो' 'नर्मदेतला गोटा' अशा प्रभावी विशेषणांनी व्यक्त देखील करतात. एवढेच नव्हे तर बालकाच्या पिढ्यांचा उद्धार करून "तुमच्या आई–बापांनी कुठं शिकून उजेड पाडलाय तेव्हा तुम्ही आता दिवे लावणार आहात?" अशी भविष्यवाणी देखील अधिकारवाणीने गरजतात. परिणामी मूल स्वत:ला कमी लेखते. आणि आपल्या मर्यादा ओलांडण्याचा प्रयत्नच करीत नाही. "आपण आपले असेच" "आपल्याला नाहीच ते जमणार" असे म्हणून हताश होते. ही घटना इंग्रजी "Selffulfilling Prophecy" म्हणून ओळखली जाते. मार्टन १९६७ व मॅकिनॉन १९६४ यांनी दाखवून दिले आहे की, "जर आपण मूल सृजनशील प्रतिसाद देणारच नाही अशी अपेक्षा ठेवली व हे त्या मुलाच्या लक्षात आणून दिले तर ते मूल सृजनशील प्रतिसाद देण्याची शक्यता खूपच घटते."

जेव्हा मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या शाळेत शिक्षकांची नेमणूक होते तेव्हा त्यांच्यापुढे तीनच पर्याय असतात.

- ते मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या शाळेत जाण्यास नकार देऊ शकतात.
- ते नेमणूक स्वीकारुन परिस्थितीतून उद्भवणाऱ्या समस्यांशी समायोजन करु शकतात.
- नेमणूक स्विकारून हजर होतात व मिळणाऱ्या पहिल्या संधीला बदलीसाठी अर्ज करु शकतात.

झोपडपट्टीतील शाळा ही बहुतेक सर्व नवोदित शिक्षकांच्या कारकिर्दीची सुरुवात असते. झोपड-पट्टीतील शाळेत बदली पाहिजे असा अर्ज प्रशासकांकडे कधीहि येत नाही. स्वाभाविकच झोपडपट्टीतील शाळेची शिक्षकाची गरज ही नवखा, गरजू, अननुभवी शिक्षक नेमून भागवली जाते. तो नवीन शिक्षक नोकरीत कायम होताच पहिले काम करतो ते बदलीवाल्याच्या यादीत स्वत:चे नाव नोंदवावयाचे.

प्राथमिक शाळेतील शिक्षक हे बालकांच्या वैयक्तिक अन्तर्गत संघर्षापेक्षा बाह्य वर्तनास अधिक महत्त्व देतात. भारतात शिक्षण एका विशिष्ट उच्चवर्गीय वर्गापुरतेच मर्यादित होते. अर्थातच शिक्षक'ला मिळालेले प्रशिक्षण हे मध्यमवर्गीय परिस्थितीशी मिळते जुळते घेणारे आहे. त्यामुळे शिक्षकास मध्यमवर्गीय मुलांना शिकवणे सोपे जाते व आवडते, त्याच तऱ्हेने ते मागासवर्गीय मुलाना शिकवू पाहतात. ते शिक्षण मुलांपासून दुरच राहाते. मुलाला कळण्यापलीकडचे शिक्षण त्याच्या काय उपयोगाचे? शिक्षकांना अभ्यासू, शान्त व आज्ञाधारक मुले चांगली वाटतात. त्यांना अस्वस्थ करणारी व न ऐकणारी मुले आवडत नाहीत. त्यांना चीड आणणारी, शिस्तीचे प्रश्न निर्माण करणारी, लक्ष विचलित करणारी मुले नको असतात. शिक्षकांना अप्रामाणिकपणाची समस्या लक्षात येते पण त्या मुलाच्या विशिष्ट भावनिक अडचणी कळत नाहीत. शिक्षक वैशिष्ट्यपूर्ण व्यक्तिगत भावनिक प्रश्नांपेक्षा अभ्यास व वर्गशिस्तीस अवाजवी महत्त्व देतात.

शिक्षक वारंवार सांगत असतात की, या मुलांना शिकविणे शक्यच नाही. त्यांचा ठाम विश्वास असतो की, या मुलांचा अनुवंश दरिद्री असल्याने ही मुले शिकूच शकणार नाहीत. या मुलांचे कौटुंबिक वातावरण दळभद्री आहे. सस्कारांचा गंध नाही. त्यांचा बुद्धिगुणांक अत्यल्प आहे. अशा समजुतीने बहुसंख्य शिक्षकांना मजुरी व मजुरी करणारे लोक यांच्याविषयी तिटकारा असतो. शिक्षकांनी दिलेल्या औपरोधिक व

अन्याय्य वागणुकीमुळे केवळ शिक्षकाविषयीच नव्हे तर संपूर्ण शिक्षक व्यवस्थेविषयी बालकाच्या मनात घृणा निर्माण होते. त्याला शाळेतून पळ काढण्यावाचून पर्यायच उरत नाही.

शिक्षकांची ही वृत्ती बदलणे अशक्य नसले तरी अवघड आहे. मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या शाळेत काम करु इच्छिणाऱ्या अनुभवी शिक्षकांना मागासवर्गीयांची परिस्थिती लक्षात घेऊन खास प्रशिक्षण देण्यात यावे. त्यासाठी त्यांना उत्तेजक सोयी उपलब्ध करून द्याव्यात. मागासवर्गीयांसाठी अधिक शिक्षक नेमण्यात यावेत. मागासवर्गीय शाळेत काम करणाऱ्या शिक्षकांना अधिक वेतन द्यावे शिक्षक-प्रशिक्षण संस्थांनी मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्या शिक्षणासाठी कोणत्याही प्रकारचे प्रयत्न आत्तापर्यंत केलेले नाहीत मागासवर्गीय मुलांना शिकवण्यासाठी विशेष अध्यापन पद्धतींचे शिक्षण देणाऱ्या संस्था सुरू करण्यात याव्यात

मध्यमवर्गीय मुलांशी तुलना करता मागासवर्गीय मुले अनेक बाबतीत दुर्बल वाटतात त्यामुळे शिक्षकांना वाटते की, या मुलांमध्ये संकल्पना घडणीची, सामाजीकरणाची, सृजनशील विचारांची अथवा अध्ययनाची क्षमताच नाही. खरे पाहता मागासवर्गीय मुलांच्यामध्ये अशा विविध क्षमता आहेत की ज्या मध्यमवर्गीय मुलांच्यात सापडणार नाहीत. त्यासाठी आपला अभ्यासक्रम त्यांच्या क्षमतावर आधारित असायला हवा दुर्बलतेवर नाही. आपण बालकांच्या क्षमता विचारात घेऊन त्यांच्या दुर्बलतेवर मात करायला हवी. शैक्षणिक संधीची समानता हा उद्‌घोष करताना आपण क्षमतेच्या समानतेकडे डोळेझाक करतो. समान क्षमतेखेरीज संधीची समानता अर्थहीन आहे.

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